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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

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EDITOR: REV. H. D. A. MAJOR, B.D.

THE CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE NUMBER.

MODERN CHURCHMEN AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.
By the EDITOR.
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.
By Professor PERCY GARDNER, Litt.D., LL.D., F.B.A.
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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REPENTANCE.—By ALICE GARDNER.
THE WEAKENING OF THE SENSE OF SIN.
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No. 5-7. AUGUST—OCTOBER, 1918. Vol. VIII.

MODERN CHURCHMEN AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

By the Editor.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE was the subject selected for the consideration of the Fifth Conference of Modern Churchmen held at Girton College, Cambridge, in August, 1918.

Most of the Conference papers and addresses appear in this number of the *Modern Churchman*. Unfortunately, mainly owing to limited space, it has been found impossible to include them all. Amongst others, a suggestive paper by Mrs. Constantine Graham, on Meditation, an important aspect of our subject, is omitted. Moreover, the papers read were often elucidated and supplemented by subsequent discussions. To publish even a *resumé* of these discussions is out of the question. Hence what appears in our Conference Number, although a useful memento of a memorable occasion, must needs mean much less to the reader who was absent than to the reader who was present.

Whilst those who were responsible for selecting the Conference subject were aware of its importance, they were equally aware of its difficulty. To get the theme treated objectively and subjectively, sympathetically and critically, soundly yet untechnically, in a series of papers, seemed no easy task. Moreover, the subject threatened to invite a conflict between pragmatists and rationalists. Yet the advantages of the subject are manifest. Modern Churchmen are often accused of being the exponents of an arid and negative Rationalism. Such a theme as Religious Experience would not only enable them to prove how far this is from being the case, but would also help them to give some measure of practical guidance in that difficult matter of the respective functions of religious experience and intellectual effort in the Christian life. Obviously modern Churchmen do not believe in ignoring the use of the intellect in religion, but they are equally sure that it cannot guide a man into the Holy of Holies. "Can man, by seeking, find out God, can he search out the Almighty unto perfection?" asks Job. The answer is plain. The unaided human intellect cannot do it.

In the religious life there is scope for active research, but there is also place for "a wise passiveness."

"Think you among this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come
But we must still be seeking?"

Man discovers, but God reveals; and it is not primarily the acute intellect, but "the upright heart and pure," to use Milton's phrase, which becomes the recipient of His secret.

"Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment;
And such as are gentle, them shall He learn His way."

Moreover, there are, broadly speaking, two ways of seeking God. Man may look outside himself or within. He usually begins by looking outside.

The religious man sees God in nature. The order and beauty and wisdom exhibited there suggest to him the operation of a Divine Mind.

The religious man sees God in history. Human evolution, marked by the gradual triumph of rational, moral, and spiritual forces over the material and brutal, seem to him to indicate the inspiration and guidance of a Divine Spirit.

The religious man feels God within him. He is conscious of a deep longing for truth, goodness, beauty, and internal peace. A voice within urges him to forsake the baser and seek the nobler things of life. This Divine Presence, he observes, becomes more real or less real in proportion as he hearkens to it and obeys it, or ignores and opposes it.

It is this third way of experiencing God which affords for the religious man the most convincing proof of God's reality and goodness. The testimony of nature to God is hard to interpret; the testimony of history to God is often dark and doubtful. (After all, may not God seen in nature and history be but a kaleidoscope which turns within the mind of man?) But the testimony of God within the human soul seems more secure. And it is not strange that this should be so, seeing that man is not only the highest point so far reached in our cosmic creative process, but that God is still carrying on His creative work in the human soul.

Now it is this testimony derived from God's working in the human soul (achieving what St. Paul would describe as His "new creation") that is commonly called the proof from Religious Experience. It is, moreover, the proof which influential teachers of the Christian Religion have earnestly urged their fellow-men to seek before all else. Moreover, these teachers are agreed that the key which unlocks the door of this religious experience is to be found, not in the exercise of the intellect, but of the will, conscience, and emotions. Hence they begin by deprecating argument and speculation on the part of him whom they would convert to a religious life. They urge him not to speculate but to act. They say to him:—

"Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Taste and see that the Lord is gracious. Give yourself to Him, and He will give Himself to you."

This attitude of theirs is exceedingly irritating to a certain type of rationalist, who declares that they wish to blind his reason. This is not

their object, but they regard the intellect as a hindrance rather than as a help at this early stage of the religious life.

Wescott wrote:—

"Truth comes through life not through logic."

Pascal wrote:—

"The heart has reasons of her own which the intellect cannot fathom."

Illingworth wrote:—

"The Christian Religion refuses to be proved first and practised afterwards; its practice and its proof go hand in hand."

These utterances but reflect the teaching of the golden sentence in the Fourth Gospel:—

"If any man willeth to do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

The emphasis on the need for the subordination of the intellect in the life of religion may be found in the teaching of all the most influential Christian preachers. They all agree with St. Ambrose: *Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum.* It hath not pleased God to save His people by argument. Salvation is initiated by a religious experience which makes the soul conscious of the presence of God, and this religious experience is achieved not by the intellect, but by the will, emotions, and conscience. We are initiated into the religious state, as Amiel points out, by a sense of voluntary dependence and joyful submission.[1] Hence the Gospel invitation runs "Repent that ye may be forgiven; Follow Me, that ye may not walk in darkness. Believe on Me, that ye may find rest to your souls. Come to Me, that ye may have life." The demand all through is: "This *do*, and thou shalt live." Hence we find Christian teachers saying: "Pray, that you may believe; believe, that you may understand; experience, that you may be convinced." They all strive to win the heart or affections; to quicken the conscience; to move and strengthen the will. The questionings of the intellect they appear to ignore. They come to men not as dialecticians, but as heralds. They bear a Divine Message, not a philosophical system. They beseech their hearers to share in an experience, not to consent to an argument.

Christianity's claim upon mankind is not primarily that it is the Religion of Reason, but that it is the Religion of holy penitence and divine forgiveness, of moral strength and spiritual joy, of divine love and human fellowship; and the testimony of religious experience is that it justifies its claim.

Is this to vilify reason? Not so. An officer does not vilify machine-guns, who bids his soldiers not to use them at an enemy three miles distant. There is a time in action when machine-guns should be silent. There is a period in the religious life when the intellect should be quiescent. The intellect has its use in the Christian life, but in the earlier stages of that life it will not secure the truth, or that form of truth of which the soul stands most in need. The saying, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," is profoundly true, not only in presenting Christ as the means by which the

[1] *Journal* E.T. p. 153.

soul comes to the Divine Father, but in setting forth the right order in that process. First, Christ is the Way. He who *comes* to Christ and *walks* with Him, him He leads into the Divine Presence. At a later stage Christ proves Himself to be the Spirit of Truth, who can answer all His disciple's practical questions about the guidance of life; and as the disciple walks with Him, and learns from Him, He becomes to him, in increasing measure, the giver of Eternal Life—the Life of God.

The Christian teacher, in urging his would-be convert not to indulge in *a priori* speculation, but to begin by treating the Christian Religion experimentally, is doing what many a scientific teacher does in his laboratory, when he says to the young student: "I want you to do a number of experiments, and to do them profitably you will have to accept certain working hypotheses; you need not, however, trouble about the proof of these hypotheses now; indeed, as you proceed you will be collecting for yourself evidence of their truth."

Or we may compare the method of the Christian teacher to that of Immanuel Kant, who would have men accept what the pure reason cannot prove, but what the practical reason demands.

Now the religious modern Churchman and the religious traditional Churchman are united in their emphasis upon the value and necessity of Religious Experience, and in the assertion that it comes to us primarily through the exercise of the will, affections and conscience, not through the exercise of the intellect. That, as John Bunyan rightly named him, Mr. Greatheart, not Mr. Greathead, is the pilgrim's guide. Both modern Churchmen and traditional Churchmen would assent with equal conviction to Principal Shairp's presentation of the case—

"I have a life in Christ to live,
I have a death in Christ to die,
But must I wait till Science give
All doubts a full reply?
Nay, rather, while the sea of doubt
Is raging wildly round about
Questioning of life and death and sin
Let me but creep within
Thy fold, O Christ, and at Thy feet
Take but the lowest seat."

But the modern Churchman differs from the traditional Churchman in this that he gives a much greater measure of intellectual freedom to the man who knows what religious experience is than is conceded to such an one by the traditional Churchman.

He who sits at Christ's feet, the modern Churchman would urge, need not be afraid to ask any question. He may, nay he ought, to use his intellect in his religion. The intellect of the personality which has been brought into conscious contact with God; the intellect of the man whose will has accepted the spiritual obedience of Christ; the intellect of the man who is faithfully and humbly seeking the illumination of the Holy Spirit, may be urged to perform to the uttermost, functions which the Christian teacher

would not urge it to attempt in its pre-Christian stage. Now at last you may unmask your machine guns. Do not be afraid of literary and historical criticism, of the results achieved by the various physical sciences, of the speculations of the philosophers. These cannot overthrow your religious life, for your religious life depends upon your religious experience; the experience, as Richard Baxter would say, "that the promises of Christ have been fulfilled in you."

As a recent writer on the implications of Christian experience has rightly said:—

> "Modern thought changes our theories, but not the facts of our spiritual life; alters our scientific, historical and philosophical outlook, but leaves our personal relation to Christ untouched."[2]

You may alter your views about miracles in accordance with the demands of modern history, science and philosophy; you may change your opinion of the apologetic value of the argument from prophecy; you may part with an infallible Bible and an infallible Church in exchange for an inspired Bible and a Spirit-bearing Church; you may jettison whole theological systems; but your Christian faith will not necessarily be weakened thereby, still less destroyed. It is the clear and unflinching perception of this which distinguishes the modern Churchman from his traditional brother, and makes him claim an intellectual freedom for Christians which the latter cannot see his way to concede.

It ought to be noted, perhaps, in this connection, that the modern Churchman, by placing such great weight upon Christian experience is compelled to distinguish very carefully between what it can prove and what it cannot prove. It can prove the reality of God's existence, the moral authority of God, the power of God to give the soul cleansing, strength, illumination, peace; it can prove Christ to be a Saviour indeed; but it cannot prove the truth of historical statements or the validity of dogmatic speculations.

Moreover, by setting so high a value on Religious Experience the modern Churchman is, of necessity, teaching men not to look to external authority as the final court of appeal in their lives. He does not say: "Despise the voice that comes from mount or altar; ignore conciliar decrees and oecumenical creeds." What he says is this: "You need not, you cannot, obey them unless they are in harmony with that voice which speaks within, in the conscience and reason in which God's Spirit dwells."

We hope that this brief statement will serve to indicate the proper place in the religious life of Religious Experience on the one hand and of intellectual speculation and research on the other. Both are needful. "If we stifle the principles of reason our religion will be absurd and ridiculous," writes Pascal. "What is religion without mysticism?" asks Amiel, and he makes answer: "A rose without perfume."

The modern Churchman will try to be both a Mystic and a Rationalist, as he will strive to be both a Catholic and a Protestant. It is comparatively easy to be either or neither; the difficulty is to be both.

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[2] The Rev. J. T. Newton in *The Holborn Review*, July, 1918, p. 337.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

By Professor PERCY GARDNER, Litt.D., LL.D., F.B.A.,
President of the Churchmen's Union.

The subject chosen for our Conference this year is at once important, difficult, and hopeful. It is strenuous, and calls for the use of our best powers. We are restrained by a natural unwillingness to speak of some experiences which seem to us too intimate and sacred to be dragged into the light of common day. And we feel that anything like oratory, or an attempt at balance and choice of language is hardly appropriate.

Yet there is justification for treating of the subject, and hope of reaching valuable results. Few subjects have in recent years made more decided progress than religious psychology; and it is under that head that our investigations will come. We shall not be content to repeat the views of saints and teachers of past ages, however greatly we may value their works; but we shall consider the facts of the world about us. And it will be strange if the greatly increased powers of observation which the progress of science, both natural and human science, has given us, do not enable us to see some things unobserved by our predecessors.

I propose to arrange my introductory address under three heads. I will treat first of recent books, and then of recent religious movements, and in the third place I will add a few observations from a more personal point of view.

Of recent literature I will not say much, as I suppose that several men among us are better acquainted with it than I can profess to be. Undoubtedly the epoch-making work on the subject is the great book of William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience.* James gave me himself an account of the origin of this work. He stayed on one occasion for a time in a French country house, and there, like a true student, examining the books in the library, he found them to consist mainly of works of devotion of Roman Catholic origin. Some of these fascinated him; and before long he began to see how certain traits of the spiritual life and of communion with God ran through them, and closely resembled the main features of the Protestant works of devotion, of Puritans, Quakers, and

Methodists, with which he, as a typical son of New England, was already acquainted. Bringing to bear on the mass of material the analytical genius of a great psychologist, and setting forth the results in his own inimitable style, he produced the lectures which fascinated, first his audience at Edinburgh, and then the more intellectual classes in the whole Christian world. It is a pity that there is no adequate account, so far as I know, of the vast correspondence, letters of sympathy and gratitude from every section of the Christian Church, which the book brought to the author.

Not of course that James stood alone, or that he was the first in the field. Romanist writers, though they lacked the breadth and the genius for generalization of James, had constantly dwelt on the main facts which he set forth. American writers have made a very complete study of the phenomena of conversion, a subject especially prominent in the religious atmosphere of America, which is profoundly influenced by Methodism. More recent works by Steven, Inge, and others, have been mentioned by Mr. Major, in his list of books useful as a preparation for this Conference.

In place of trying to give a general account of these books, I wish to call your attention to the most recent, and not the least interesting, book bearing on religious experience, Mr. Dannatt's *Faith of a Farmer* (1917). It consists of extracts from a diary of a man whom most people would be surprised to find among the Mystics. He was an Essex farmer, and an eminently scientific one. He made his business the great pursuit of his life. He was extraordinarily successful, and as his biographer remarks, he "snatched success out of the very circumstances that spelt failure for so many." A succession of rainy years, which made agriculture difficult, stimulated him to experiment and innovation, and so to discovery and to prosperity. In his useful book, *Practical hints from the note-book of an old farmer*, he describes the ideal farmer in words which apply fully to himself:—

> "He must be an early riser, and have an eye to note and take account of everything he comes across: he must be a good judge of stock, a good manager of men, gifted with foresight to an uncommon degree; a good mechanic; and he must also have a smattering of chemistry; and above all, he must have his whole heart and soul in his business."

When I add that Mr. Dannatt was a thorough family man, with eleven children, a churchwarden, and greatly attached to the ordinary services of the Church of England, we seem to have the picture of the most typical and ordinary Englishman that we can imagine. Yet this man appears in his diary as a thorough mystic. He writes on God and the world, on faith and love and self-renunciation, in the same kind of language as the great saints of the Church, of whom he had probably never heard. His theology is akin to the theology of the *Theologia Germanica;* and his inner life is as completely above that of the mere senses as was that of Thomas à Kempis or William Law. He says that he wrote not a word in his diary without prayer, and he claims that the Divine Spirit constantly supplied him with thought and with energy to express it in life and action. Love, self-renunciation, fellowship with Christ, eternal life are his constant themes; and in the sufferings of his later life he found an ever-present alleviation in a belief which could not be shaken in the goodness and the love of God.

Could one have a better proof that the inner life of the Christian religion is appropriate to the most practical of lives, and belongs to the most essential ground of human nature than the religious experience of Mr. Dannatt? Some of my friends are disposed to think that the highest religious devotion cannot be found outside the Catholic faith. But this farmer was evangelical to the backbone. Some people think that the life in Christ in its highest forms must be lived in silence and solitude. But this man was busy, with his whole soul in his work, from the dawn to the evening. Truly faith like wisdom is justified of all her children.

Mr. Dannatt's education was quite elementary. Of criticism as applied to the Bible, he had no inkling; to him the Bible was simply the inspired word of God. He placed no reliance whatever on external rites, nor did he feel the least need of a priest. But the power which he regarded as the Divine Spirit gave him a wisdom which is not of the world; and his reading of Scripture, though often naive, is very seldom false from a broad point of view. Even in the Jewish prophets he finds a reflex of the best truth of Christianity. His views as regards the doctrine of the Trinity are unformed like those of St. Paul;

he speaks undiscriminatingly of God, Christ, Jesus, the Holy Spirit; and yet this vagueness of speech seems to matter very little; for he speaks always of realities of practical life, of the Christian experience. Consciously, he was a member of the body of Christ; and through him the Spirit of Christ often spoke, and in him acted, producing alike corn in the farm and eternal life in the spirit.

But Mr. Dannatt by no means stands alone. When I find myself in some parts of England, notably Yorkshire and Cornwall, I sometimes attend the services of the Primitive Methodists. There I have heard from laymen of little education, clerks and mechanics, statements of religious experience so direct and simple, so free from any traditional theology, that the gold is almost unmixed with alloy, and the critical faculty finds less to question, the historic sense finds less that requires re-interpretation, than in some of the discourses of great liberal theologians in the University pulpit. The same holds of the speakers in many a Quaker meeting.

But let us turn from the utterances of individuals to the facts of religious movements. As Plato found the ethics of the individual written large in the structure of his ideal republic, so often the most notable points in the Christian experience of an age are seen most clearly in the rise of churches and societies. I would cite especially the Christian Student Movement, and the great Missionary Movement which culminated in the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, and is being continued by its various offshoots and committees.

If one who was not present at the Edinburgh Conference may venture to speak of it, I would say that it was a very important landmark in the history of Christianity. All who were present seem to have felt a conviction that God was working visibly in the midst of it, and leading the Churches to a new lap of their journey. Most unfortunately the almost immediate outbreak of war violently turned the minds of men in another direction; the sudden storm swept away the flowers which were setting for fruit, and delayed for years the promised revival of religion. But even so, the after working of the Conference has been of very great importance. I know of scarcely any more fruitful Christian literature than is to be

found in the *International Review of Missions*, published quarterly, which represents the working of the new spirit in the mission field. It shews clearly what a change in orientation the missionary movement is making. Formerly missionaries took with them from home a cut and dried scheme of doctrine and organization, belonging to the particular branch of the Church to which they belonged, and tried to force it upon their converts of brown, yellow, or black race. It was a procrustean bed. Any native way of life or thought which did not fit into their scheme was ruthlessly cut away. The object was to produce, as exactly as possible, an imitation of one of our religious bodies. The result was sometimes what an archaeologist would call a barbarous imitation, in which the general aspect of the thing to be imitated was preserved, but all the naturalness, the beauty, the freshness, was gone.

Very different is the present procedure of the more intelligent missionaries. They think that a divine light lightens every man who comes into the world, that to every race and nation there is given some share of the Divine Spirit, that, in the language of St. Peter, "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him." The missionaries are studying religious psychology; and instead of searching for weak points in the native religion which may give them opportunities for attacking it, they are finding out its strong points, on which they may build a new fabric of faith in Christ. They allow the native churches to develop in their own way. As some of them say, the forms of Christianity adapted to the peoples of Europe require changes and adaptations before they can really be suitable to peoples of another history and another disposition. Every race, even the natives of Central Africa and Polynesia, has something to contribute to the perfection and development of Christianity. And naturally peoples who have a long history and a civilisation in some respects advanced, the peoples of India, of China, of Japan, must bring Christianity into some kind of relation to the mentality developed by their history.

This kind of missionary spirit seems to me infinitely more promising for the future of the world. And it may be added that it far more closely resembles the ways of the missionaries

of early Christianity. In a very few centuries after the Christian era there were in Judaea, in Asia, in Armenia, in Africa, native churches which had a great deal that was distinctive and national about them. In time, it is true, in western Europe the Church of Rome established an uniform domination; but in the sixteenth century that uniformity again broke up.

However, I am in danger of drifting beyond the strict limits of my subject, which is, in all conscience, wide enough. I must pass on to use the brief minutes assigned to me in setting forth what seem to me some of the landmarks of the realm of religious experience.

Perhaps the most important of all the dividing lines which traverse that realm is the line which divides the conscious from the sub-conscious.

I suppose that this distinction, familiar to modern psychology, is not new to most of those present. We have ceased to identify personality with consciousness. We now regard each human being as much more extensive. We may compare him to an iceberg, of which a small part floats visible on the surface of the ocean, while a larger part lies beneath the surface. And sometimes, as the iceberg slowly melts, a part of it which had been submerged comes to the surface, and a part which had been above the surface sinks below it. So, in man, we see but part at a time. But there are constant reactions between the conscious and the sub-conscious elements. And through the sub-conscious there come into human life a number of impulses and feelings originating in the profound deeps, and becoming clear and articulate as they pass into the light of the sun. It is especially through the sub-conscious part of man's being that wider forces, social and spiritual, come to bear upon the play of thought, feeling, and conduct which makes up human life.

The great and essential distinction is that whereas the self of consciousness, the supraliminal self, is clearly personal, a soul and a character built up with purpose and intention, the subliminal element in us is more impersonal and more indefinite. Parts of it may stand in close relation to the personality, but the background of it slopes away into the impersonal, and seems to be in contact with a wider and more generalized being,

open to influences which we cannot fully understand, subject to ebbs and flows, to exaltations and depressions, the results of which come to the light in conscious thought, but which yet extend far beyond the limits of our conscious being. I have elsewhere used another metaphor which seems to me helpful. I have compared the conscious personality to a gulf of the sea to which the shore gives a form and a character, yet which is connected with the boundless sea, and which feels the ebb and flow of the tides which are caused and regulated by the sun and moon, with which the gulf itself seems to have no direct connection.

We must not, of course, carry this analogy too far; nothing in these studies is more dangerous than an overstrained analogy; but it may serve, nevertheless, as a suggestion.

Alike in the history of the church, and in recent writings, there may be seen two different conceptions of the direct influence of the Divine Spirit on men. According to one view it is beneath consciousness, in the sub-conscious strata of our being, that God especially works. This one may call the *mystic* view. It holds that only as a man throws aside personality, desire, purpose, and lays his spirit passively bare to the higher impulses which come from above, only then will the Divine Spirit use him as an instrument, and communicate to him the deep things of God. This is expressed in innumerable passages of such works as the *Imitatio Christi* and the *Theologia Germanica.*

The majority of mankind, and I would venture to say the vast majority of women, are more under the influence of emotion than of reason. And emotion arises out of, and primarily belongs to, the subconscious strata of our being. Thus it is usual, when communications of the Divine Spirit are spoken of, to regard such communications as addressed primarily to the emotions. In the phenomena of conversion, which have specially been a subject of study by modern psychology, emotion is the most prominent feature. The sense of sin, the feeling of a need of deliverance, the scorn of one's own righteousness, and an eager desire to throw oneself on the eternal righteousness, such emotions, sometimes leading in their intensity to fainting and even to collapse, are familiar

to those who have studied religious revivals. Such phenomena have accompanied the preaching of Christianity from the earliest times; and the first Christians were accustomed, as are many in our day, to see in these paroxysms of moral crisis the direct working of the Spirit of God. Even the abnormal accompaniments of conversion, the speaking in unknown tongues, faith-healing, and the like, have been conspicuous in modern as in ancient times. And in the lives of Christian saints, as recorded by biographers, or in their own confessions, there has been a continuation of these powerful emotions through life. These biographies shew, in violent alternation, fits of despair and of exultation, of fear of hell and certainty of heaven, which have carried away the saint to the eternal heights or the bottomless abysses. And the reader often feels that, even if there was often something of morbid excess in these spiritual transports, they yet had a wonderful effect in purifying the life, in raising it above the things of earth, in bringing it into the region of eternal life. It is by a healthy instinct that in most countries people in general, even when they had little belief in Christianity, have venerated the Christian saint.

True and important as is this view of mystic inspiration, it yet has a dark and a painful side. The sub-conscious part of man's nature is open not only to divine influences and inspirations, but also to sinister and evil influences of a spiritual character. Anyone who reads the lives of the Saints will see how constantly they have had to strive against evil suggestions surging up from below.

Their life was a continual struggle, which sometimes still continued, when in the opinion of the world sainthood was attained. And it is obvious to anyone who reads the New Testament that side by side with divine inspiration, diabolic inspiration besets men's souls. The two kinds of inspiration differ as heaven from hell; and yet we know that saints have been hard put to it sometimes to determine whether impulses which came into their spirits came from above or from below. And when Jesus Himself was questioned on this point the only test which He gave was a practical one, "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Ye shall know them by

their fruits." "Beloved," writes the Fourth Evangelist, "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God."

Thus, though no one who believes at all in divine inspiration can doubt that many of its greatest expressions, in word, in feeling, and in deed, work through the sub-conscious, yet we are compelled to treat what is thus originated with extreme care, and it is healthy to regard it even with some suspicion.

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, that monument of the good sense of the Church in the second century, gives very sane directions as to the way in which teachers who claim a personal inspiration should be tested. "Not everyone," it says, "that speaketh in the spirit is a prophet; but only, if he have the behaviour of the Lord." "Whosoever saith in the spirit, give me money or any other things, ye shall not hearken to him." It is clear that even thus early men false and covetous had claimed to be prophets. Nor can we set them aside as mere pretenders and hypocrites: probably most of them believed in their mission; but the sources of it in the subconscious levels of the mind were contaminated with base elements, desire of predominance or desire of gain.

In England and America in recent times we have had an abundance of men who have claimed inspiration, such as the notable Mr. Harris, who for a time dominated that fine spirit Laurence Oliphant. But the tests of the *Didachê* would be fatal to nearly all of them. They nearly all ask for money; and few indeed of them show the behaviour of the Lord.

I do not think we shall be able, in our discussions of religious experience, wholly to avoid a subject of great difficulty, which in fact lies right across our path, and compels consideration. I mean the subject of spiritualism, in the technical sense. There exists a great number of sensitives, or mediums, who are in the habit of passing into a condition of trance, and then speaking or writing words which they claim to receive direct from disembodied spirits. And on such communications there has been founded a religion which claims to be a direct revelation from the spirit world.

Though I have never taken a part in regular spiritualistic seances, I have given a good deal of time to the study of

spiritualist literature. And I am fully convinced that we are in the presence of phenomena of the greatest importance for the future of religion, though, as I shall presently shew, we cannot accept literally the spiritualist claim to direct inspiration.

As regards the merely physical phenomena of spiritism, I must confess that I am convinced. It is now possible to measure, with instruments of precision, the force which a medium can apply to objects at a distance, and the loss of weight which the medium suffers in consequence. Thus it seems clear that certain sensitives can apply physical force without contact. But these physical, or, as Dr. Maxwell calls them, metapsychical phenomena have nothing to do with morality or religion; they are important to the physiologist, but less so to the psychologist. But there is a harvest also for the psychologist, if we may think, as I believe we may, that the transfer of thought and emotion from person to person is also possible without actual contact. The bearing of this discovery on history, on politics, on the phenomena of religion, is extremely important, and necessitates the re-thinking and the re-writing of much which passes for psychology and sociology among us.

I have seen a few papers recently published in which an attempt is made to apply the safer results of psychical investigation to Christian purpose. I would specially mention Mr. Emmet's paper on the *Resurrection of Christ* in the Ripon Conference number of our Journal, and Dr. Skrine's paper on *Telepathy as interpreting Christ* in the *Hibbert Journal* of October, 1917. I think that investigators proceeding with caution and reverence may do much on these lines to explain the phenomena and to help the future of the Christian religion.

But when we come to the supposed revelations of spiritualists in regard to the spirit world and a future state and God Himself, we have to apply severer tests. That the mediums write these communications under some sort of psychical influence cannot be denied. Nor can it be reasonably held they are in all cases imposture. But there are great difficulties as to the actual source whence they come. Few people are disposed to believe that the revelations come from the persons to whom the

mediums attribute them. At present there cannot be said to be any certainty in this matter. And so we have to fall back upon the old test of fruits. This test is set forth alike in the Gospels and other early Christian writings as specially applicable in the case of direct spiritual revelations, or communications which profess to be such. We have to judge by the ordinary faculties which God has given us alike the revelations themselves, and the kind of conduct to which they lead in the mediums themselves. The test is a trying and even a fatal one. We may easily observe two things which stimulate reflection. In the first place, there is contained in the revelations of the sub-consciousness of mediums, together with something which may have value, an immense deal which is beyond question of no value at all, mere ravings, out of relation to all good sense and wisdom. How little of all that is published as a communication from the spirits of good and wise men will bear the least reflection! And in the second place it seems quite clear that the habit of receiving these communications produces or encourages in the medium a spirit of trickery and falsehood. Worse still, it seems to be clearly established that sexual irregularities are more common in this class of sensitives than among their neighbours. It is the less surprising that this should be the case, because the sexual feelings occupy a prominent, often a dominant, position in the sub-conscious layers of mind and character. What if we apply here the test of fruits? Will it not warn us how dangerous is the ground on which we are moving?

The second view of inspiration, which is less common and attractive, seems to be equally true and more trustworthy. It regards divine inspiration as an influence acting less on the subconscious than on the conscious elements of man's nature, touching the part of it which is best into a new and higher life, giving wisdom to the intelligence, high ideals to the artist, an untiring energy of will to the practical reformer. It takes man, as he is and has become, and raises him to a higher power and efficiency. It acts less upon the emotions and the imagination, and more upon the intelligence and the practical faculties. This kind of inspiration is often mentioned in the Jewish Scriptures, where the warlike skill of a Joshua and the

wisdom of a Solomon are regarded as quite as much the fruits of divine inspiration as the more passionate utterances of the Prophets. The Jewish nation was regarded as the subject of special divine guidance, and the qualities in its leaders and heroes which helped it towards its divinely appointed goal were regarded as imparted by the Spirit of God. This fact opens to us fresh vistas, had I time to speak of the inspiration of nations and of Churches. But I must adhere to the individual and personal point of view.

But the particular kind of inspiration on which I wish specially to say a few words is the divine illumination of the intellect. That there is a wisdom which is bestowed from above is dwelt on largely in both Psalms and Proverbs. The spirit of God and the wisdom of God seem to some of the writers to be the same. "The Lord," says the author of *Proverbs*,[1] "giveth wisdom; He layeth up sound wisdom for the upright." "Thou shalt make me to know wisdom" writes the Psalmist. The Fourth Evangelist writes that wisdom (the logos) was made flesh in Jesus Christ. "If any man lack wisdom," writes St. James, "let him ask of God." And he further defines this wisdom. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

Wisdom may be shown either in the conduct of life or in an eminently true and sane view of realities. As regards practical conduct, it is notable how sane and wise were some of the mystic saints of the Middle Ages, such as Catharine and Theresa. In the interesting life of Brother Lawrence we find an exquisitely simple account of the way in which, being naturally one of the most awkward and unpractical of men, he found a way to do the duties of life quite well by a constant and complete reliance on prayer and on the love of God. When a man or a woman is emptied alike of self-seeking and of self-consciousness, the eyes are wonderfully cleared to see what is the right thing to do.

But when the wisdom is theoretic, in matters of science and thought, the matter is less simple. No inspiration is of a character to give a student knowledge of things which he has

[1] Proverbs ii. 6.

not considered, or to place an unlearned man on the same level as a learned man. God does not tell us things which it is our business and duty to find out for ourselves. Yet even in the most purely intellectual matters, I am sure that those who ask for divine aid will find their minds enlightened, and their power of utterance increased.

The lover of righteousness and the lover of truth partake of the same spirit. Both alike have to set aside personal feeling and prejudice, to weigh with an even hand their own claims and the claims of others, to try in all things to trace the ways of the divine will. To set aside a favourite theory because it is evidently in conflict with fact and reality may, to a man who leads a keenly intellectual life, need as much self-denial and self-mastery as the giving up of a personal pleasure or desire when it is seen to conflict with the general good. To allow one's views in history or politics to be warped by prejudice or by self-interest is a parallel proceeding to allowing one's own enjoyments to injure either one's neighbours or society in general.

St. Paul, whose strong good sense is almost as noteworthy as his spiritual enthusiasm, teaches clearly that the intellect is as much subject to divine inspiration as the emotions and heart. There are, he says, diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; diversities of working, but the same God. To one Christian is given, by the Spirit, the power to work healings or to speak with tongues. But these mere ecstatic revelations St. Paul puts very low down in the scale of attainments. To others, he says, the Spirit gives faith. But quite as high he places the wisdom and the knowledge imparted by the Spirit; these he speaks of as the crown of the Christian calling.[2] And in another place he writes, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also," and still more strongly, "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in an (unknown) tongue," Even the working of miracles, whether by himself or others, he places at a lower level than the gift of divine wisdom.

It was a splendid tradition, and never wholly abandoned by the Church. The great intellectual teachers of the Church,

[2] 2 Cor. xii. 8,

Clement of Alexandria,[8] Augustine, Jerome, were put in the lists of saints. And in the Middle Ages, St. Thomas Aquinas, the great thinker, who was in his time attacked as a heretic, but who lived to baptise Aristotle into Christ, is one of the chief of the saints. But just as in his subconscious part man is in danger of being misled by impulses from below, so in his conscious work he may be attacked by baser motives, the desire to please the people, inordinate love of paradox and novelty, indolence, and many another messenger of Satan which lies in wait to mislead the scholar.

But I would seriously ask, have not we in England almost lost this point of view? Do we think that a man who, by self-control and self-sacrifice, has greatly furthered our knowledge of God and man, is a saint? We use the word saint, in speaking of such men, with hesitation, and with a fear that we are saying something profane. Can we not come nearer to the attitude of St. James and St. Paul? Were not such inspired, in spite of all their shortcomings, by the light that lighteth every man that comes into the world? Can we not free ourselves from cant; and see things as they are in reality?

I must not be misunderstood. It is not mere ability, nor mere success and fame, which make the saint of wisdom, but humbleness, courage, patience, a keen desire that the will of God may be done, and the happiness of man furthered. And these qualities may exist in any degree, from a merely conventional tendency to a burning enthusiasm. It is only in the intenser form that these qualities make the saint. And even in that form they do not usually lead a man to objective and eternal truth; but they lead him to a high degree of relative truth, truth good for the time and country. And saintship in matters intellectual is quite as rare as saintship in matters emotional or practical.

The last observation which I have to make is perhaps the most important, though I must state it briefly. The religion of experience has but little to do with church organization or with creed. This is clearly shewn in James' book. And it is confirmed by observation. The High Church Bishop of Oxford is on this side in close touch with the Quakers. On

[8] Although a Pope struck his name off the roll.

this side, if I may for a moment become personal, I mostly find myself in close agreement with Baron von Hügel, who is a strong Roman Catholic. Christian mysticism and ethics are different from those of the Buddhists and Mohammedans; but within the wide limits of Christianity the differences in these matters are quite unessential. This is a fact of the utmost importance, and a good augury for possible unity in the Christian Church of the future. As Archbishop Temple has observed, religion is rapidly, in the minds of reflective persons, becoming in a great measure detached from history and dogma, and more and more closely connected with present fact and experience. It is becoming more psychological, and so moving in the direction of synthesis and unity. This fact may well inspire us with confidence, and a determination to do what we can to help Christianity to recover the route on which she started, and to which she must return if she is to save the modern world.

It will perhaps be observed that in this address I have spoken of various bodies of Christians and non-Christians, but I have said little about our Church of England. The fact is that the most recent of the important movements of our Church, the Oxford Movement, has tended to turn the minds of Churchmen away from Christian experience to Church history and organization; it has directed attention to the past rather than to the present and the future. And the Evangelical party, who were in the last century strong believers in the reality of spiritual experience, have been of late in great degree discredited in consequence of their stubborn adherence to that catastrophic and miraculous view of early Christianity, which has been completetly undermined by the spread of historic research and criticism. Hence I greatly fear that, alike in the English Church, and among what are called the orthodox dissenting bodies, there has been a decay in the recognition of the reality and the value of experience in religion.

This is profoundly to be regretted. The falling off in this matter means the falling back of Christianity. It does not seem that even the searching experiences of the great war have acted, to the extent we might have hoped, in throwing men

back on the great realities of religion. Some books produced by the war, notably those of Donald Hankey, Charles Matthews, and Neville Talbot, have clearly shewn that this tendency does exist. But alas! the Churches have so greatly neglected their duty of keeping men in touch with spiritual realities that soldiers, as a rule, do not readily understand their nature. Some of our men are driven back on the more materialist religion of the Roman Church; most of them do not seem to see what Christianity has to do with practical life.

There is a great gap to fill. And that gap must be filled by those who combine a devotion to the eternal principles of Christianity with a keen appreciation of the facts of history and of the world about us, who cultivate religious psychology while they trust to the working of the spirit of Christ among His followers. May our meeting on this occasion tend alike to make clear to our minds the realities of the spiritual world, and to stimulate our energies earnestly to work with the divine will towards better and truer conditions of the Church and of society.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SIN.

By the Rev. F. R. Tennant, D.D., B.Sc., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Psychology is concerned with three of the four primary elements involved in the conception of personal sin. Of the four conditions of accountable moral action, the conditions necessary for the occurence of sin, the first is the existence of an objective law of which sin is the transgression, or of a moral standard of which sin is the falling short. This is a matter of ethics rather than of psychology, and lies outside our present subject. I pass on, therefore, to the second condition: viz., awareness on the part of the agent, at the time of his moral

activity, of the content of this law or standard, and of its claim upon himself. This is an important condition, in that it presents the distinction to be drawn between sin and imperfection: a distinction which has frequently been overlooked. It is not sufficient, in order that conduct be accounted moral, and therefore sinful, that it be pronounced by any human society to be incompatible with *their* objective standard; an individual's conduct must be capable of being seen by the individual himself, at the given time, to be inconsistent with a norm which he recognises as binding on him. A being, such as the human infant, who can recognise no moral standard, is *ipso facto* not a moral being, and therefore cannot sin. A being such as an adult heathen, who is inevitably ignorant of certain Christian standards, is non-moral with regard to those particular standards however enlightened he be as to others. Such laws have no dominion over him; and it cannot be said of him, in the strict sense of the word, that he *ought* to satisfy them.

The infant's or the heathen's conduct may be imperfect; but in the cases instanced, it is not sinful: else we should logically be required to attribute sin to snakes and even to avalanches. The one and only difference between the non-moral and the moral being that has relevance in the present connexion, is capacity on the part of the former agent, and incapacity on the part of the latter, for awareness that a given ethical standard is binding on himself. Non-compliance with an objective standard does not necessarily constitute sin: to think so would be to miss altogether the significance of 'the moral.' All sin is imperfection, but not all imperfection is sin. Development, again, is incompatible with continuity of perfection; but the Christian can least of all men deny that development in favour with God and man may be sinless.

It follows from this psychological fact that moral consciousness is essential for moral conduct, that there cannot possibly be one sole and absolute moral standard, falling short of which, in any conditions and circumstances, convicts of sin. The only standard relevant is the highest which, in the all-seeing eye of God, the agent can recognise at the time of the activity whose moral evaluation is in question. The standard will therefore differ for different individuals and societies, and for the same

individual or society at different stages of its moral progress. What is fixed is rather comparable to the ratio between two variables; and it is only because the moral standard, by reference to which sin is determined, is thus elastic or comparable to a sliding scale, that it preserves inviolably its absoluteness. We conclude, then, with Browning, that "ignorance that sins is safe;" provided, of course, that a man be not the culpable cause of his ignorance, "being blind who might have seen"—which is a different matter altogether.

We may turn now from the cognitive faculty which is involved in sinful conduct to the conative side of human nature, and endeavour, under the guidance of psychology, to define accurately the relation in which our natural impulses, appetites and passions, stand to sinfulness. The confounding of these conative tendencies, apart from the attitude of the will towards them, with sin, has been responsible for even more disastrous error in doctrines of sin than the confusion, upon which I have already remarked, between sin and guiltless imperfection. I would emphasise that in themselves natural appetites, &c., are not sinful, and not even capable of ethical evaluation. Like the feelings—of pleasure and pain—these strivings expressive of unrest, called conations, and roughly identical with desires and aversions, arise within us quite independently of our volition. We may lump with them the conscious processes distinguished as emotions, which are often equally spontaneous and involuntary, and are also part of the raw material out of which sin is made, in that they are incentives to action and sources of motive.

In the first place, all these kinds of consciousness are inevitable; most of them are also necessary—in the biological sense of being essential to health or to life or to maintenance of the race. They are also natural, and from the biologist's and the psychologist's point of view are the outcome of no abnormity, no derangement of mind or of body. They belong to man as God made him. Further, they are entirely non-moral; for, as will presently be emphasised, theology (when not speaking carelessly) agrees with psychology and ethics in restricting the term 'moral' solely to what is the output of intentional volition. Again, they are neutral, or indifferent as to what moral conduct

will be made out of them. They are just as much the basis of the highest virtues as of the basest vices. And lastly, they emerge in us without the slightest regard to the fitness of the occasion—from the moral point of view; they are naïve as children in causing *contretemps* and arriving unseasonably. Hunger, for instance, does not restrain its clamorous insistence when only another person's viands are accessible to one. For all these reasons psychology sees in such things as instincts and impulses, appetites and passions, and primary emotions, nothing patient of moral evaluation, any more than in arsenic and alcohol, but only what is non-moral, ethically neutral and indifferent. These conations are therefore not sinful; no natural passion as such is base-born or in any way condemnable. They are, however, the primary stuff out of which sinful conduct is shaped. But it is the will which shapes, and not the stuff which it shapes, that alone calls for ethical approval or disapproval.

We have within us, then, mental or conscious processes which solicit the will to act in ways which the conscience must often disapprove. And for this we are not accountable. God chose to make man by evolution from the brutes. Propensities which we share with the lower animal are fixed in the race. Hence the manifold temptations that death alone can cure. And now we may observe that a creature constituted and evolved as man has been, would not be a moral agent in the sense in which man actually is such, unless there were provision in this way for his being prompted to lower ethical ends than the highest he can know. Conflict between appetite and conscience, between higher and lower desires, is as essential to morality of the human type—as distinct from the Divine or the angelic—as, scientifically speaking, it is unavoidable until, after long self-coercion, man enters upon the "saint's rest." Man is both a conative and a rational being; and impulse and moral reason cannot always coincide without being brought by effort into harmony. That is at once the condition of our morality, and the sufficient explanation of the appearance of sin in practically every child of man that attains to moral discretion.

Thus psychology would have us recognise that a concept of sin such as is to be of universal and of rigid application must

be framed in the light of the indisputable facts that man is conscious before he is self-conscious, impulsive and appetitive before he is volitional, and volitional before he is moralised. A creature needing nourishment, and belonging to a race renewed similarly to those from which he is descended, certain organic propensities are, or at least once were, indispensable to his nature.

From these elemental needs of his being there arise necessarily and naturally springs of action such as appetites, feelings, and emotions, which prompt the will, regardless of the fact that satisfaction of appetite, or action in obedience to emotional impulse, in certain circumstances may be opposed to higher interests and to moral norms. Such propensities are not sinful, either before or after the emergence of will and the dawning of conscience. It is only when they are metamorphosed by the conscious will from primary into derived, or secondary, springs of action, that they first acquire moral status and become, as the case may be, temptations to vice or ingredients of virtue. But though neither sinful in themselves, nor marks of sinful bias in the nascent will, these tendencies inherent in our psychical constitution are the primary material out of which the will constructs sin. Irrational impulse and cognitive springs of conduct are often necessarily at variance, so that the moral subject is impelled at once in two directions. Hence the struggle between impulse and reason, or rather the conflict of the will as prompted to a lower, and the will as prompted to a higher, end, in which human morality has its being and sin its birth.

So far we have considered only the original sources of the incentives which prompt the will to action, and have been occupied, therefore, with the non-moral. With these only, and without volition, we should be but unmoral animals. An action can only be called a sin when, in presence of an impulse towards an ethically higher end, the will actually yields to an impulse towards a lower. It is not the existence in man of any appetitive tendencies, but the voluntary surrender of the self to them, which constitutes sin. "Involuntary" or "unintentional" sin, like "unconscious" sin is a complete misnomer denoting a contradiction in terms. With the capacity to choose between

higher and lower ends, the possibility of sin first emerges. And as this is universally recognised, it will not be necessary further to emphasise even so important a point. I would merely observe that sometimes theologians who quite definitely and explicitly affirm the will to be the sole seat of sin, when actual sin is exclusively being contemplated, allow themselves to speak when referring to what is called 'original sin,' of the evil which cleaves to us at our very birth, of a power the origin of which must be beyond the conscious exercise of our freedom of will, or of an abiding root of sin which a man finds present in himself when his moral consciousness awakes. This is, however, an obvious inconsistency; a confounding of the non-moral source of the material out of which the will constructs sin with the activity which alone is properly to be called 'sinful.'

Further, it is not enough to characterise sin by the word 'voluntary' or 'volitional.' Something yet more is essential to the full and self-consistent concept of sin; viz., intention. It is only to intentional conduct that moralty, in the strict sense of the term, has relevance. Our Lord Himself insisted on the important truth that intention is the ultimate object of ethical judgment. Unintentional deviation from the moral standard in outward act is mere semblence of vice; while intention prevented externally from actualisation in deed, is as guilty as the practical fulfilment thereof. Morality, and therefore sin, is internal; that which proceedeth from the heart alone defileth a man.

I have for the sake of clearness, treated our lower conative tendencies and the will separately. But as a matter of fact, from the time when self-consciousness, volition, and morality dawn in us, our blind springs of action cease to be blind or to exist in separate compartments of the mind. When imbued with volitional response, they become desires, or secondary springs of action. This complicity of the will transmutes the non-moral impulse into self-conscious desire, into a personal attitude. To possess appetites is not sinful; but to cherish desires for what the conscience forbids, is to have passed beyond temptation—which must carefully be distinguished from sin—and to have entered on the path of moral evil. We soon discover that appetites whose satisfaction is pleasant can be stimulated, by means of one's own devising, in order to be

enjoyed. Hunger may be voluntarily transformed into gluttony, natural use into lust, sensibility into voluptuousness; and as knowledge and experience grow, the lengths to which "making provision for the flesh" can be carried become extended. The same thing applies to the primary emotions: *e.g.*, natural antipathy may be metamorphosed into malice, anger into what Keats has happily called "voluptuous rage," or into vindictiveness, and fear into cowardice. But there is no need, for our present purpose, to follow up further the development of the intricacy of the moral life of man; the essentials for a sound psychology of sin are manifested, and can be most easily and clearly studied, in the elementary or primary moral situations such as those to which I have confined your attention. Doubtless the more complex types of sin are psychologically more interesting; but there is not time to discuss them now: and indeed I must pass over many questions concerning sin as to which modern and recent psychology contribute valuable light. In these circumstances I may perhaps take leave to refer any who may be interested in the subject to my book *The Concept of Sin* (1912), where theoretical considerations concerning actual sin, and practical applications of them, are discussed at length.

Waiving, then, in this lecture, all reference to psychology of habit, of sinful states as distinct from sinful acts, of temptation, of the atrophy of moral consciousness through sinfulness of life, and various other subjects of importance to the study of actual and personal sin, I would now say a few words with regard to the notions of accountability and guilt. These, as I have all along been implying, are strictly correlative with sin, as that term is accurately defined and consistently used. Where there is no accountability, there can be no morality; and where there is no guilt, there can be no sin.

I have pointed out, in the book to which I just now referred, that these two terms 'accountability' and 'guilt,' like many others necessarily involved in the discussion of the nature of sin, contain an ambiguity which had generally, if not always, been unsuspected by theological writers. Psychology is aware that any conscious process is capable of being regarded from two different standpoints, viz., (1) that of the subject at the

time when he is having the given experience, and (2) that of another person, or of the same subject reflecting on the experience at a later time. The confusion of these two standpoints constitutes what is known as 'the psychologist's fallacy,' though the fallacy is by no means confined to the psychologist. The latter of these two standpoints is that of objective fact, of science, of universal knowledge: the former, which, to avoid troublesome technicalities, I will now take the liberty inaccurately but conveniently to call 'subjective,' is peculiar to the subject himself, and confined to the moment of his given experience. Now obviously self-judgment from the 'subjective' standpoint may be, and may necessarily be, the opposite of the judgment passed from the 'objective' standpoint upon the agent of a particular moral act. One whose law was the *lex talionis* would not be 'subjectively' guilty in avenging, say an injury to his son; he would be guiltless, even self-approving; but from our point of view, and from his own if he became a Christian, his act of revenge would be condemnable, sinful. Hence it is plain that all such terms as 'accountability' and 'guilt' have two possible meanings, accordingly as they refer to the 'subjective' and 'objective' standpoints respectively. And from what has preceded, it will be obvious that 'sin' is only correlative with the subjective meaning. In this connexion St. Paul's directions as to food offered to idols are interesting, as shewing that he recognised this truth. But inasmuch as the science of ethics usually presupposes (though with frequent lapses) the objective standpoint, theology has sometimes been misled into incorporating the attitude of that science into its own teaching on sin: so that sin and imperfection become indistinguishable. Responsibility is real, whether an agent be conscious of responsibility or not; but it is 'subjectively' apprehended responsibility alone which is involved in sin. There may be guilt in a person's consciousness when he is objectively guiltless, *i.e.*, sin-consciousness may exist when there has been no actual sin. And, of course, the converse may happen. Hence it is that the sin-consciousness, or sense of sin, in an individual, is no secure starting-point for a concept or a doctrine of sin. And it may be observed that the 'immediacy' sometimes ascribed to the sense of sin, with a

view to establishing its finality, suffers from the same kind of ambiguity as the ethical terms which we have been considering. Our perception of a tree, *e.g.*, is 'immediate' from our point of view at the moment we experience it: we are unaware then of its dependence on prior experience; but, as a matter of fact, or of knowledge from the objective standpoint, such a perception is complexly mediate. Indeed it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance, for theology and ethics, of this distinction of standpoints to which we are indebted to the psychologist. Those who have endeavoured to approach the doctrine of sin from the basis of the individual's sense of sin have generally correlated sinfulness, as it is apprehended from the one standpoint, with guilt as apprehended from the other: which, of course, has led to confusion. The concept and doctrine of sin have indeed been beset with confusions arising from aloofness from psychology; and the elimination of such errors will not only affect theoretical theology, but also religious practice.

A consistent and psychologically sound conception of sin will tend, for instance, to prevent morbid self-examination, indulgence in exaggerated language concerning sin, the frequent libelling of the pleasures of 'sense,' faulty estimates of degrees of guilt, and, while condemning the heinous principle "to know all is to forgive all," will conduce to a true charity towards sin based upon the knowledge that "the balance" can only "be adjusted," in many cases, by the hand of an all-seeing God, to whom alone our 'subjective' standpoint is 'objective.'

We are now in a position to attempt a definition of what sin is; and I would offer the following description of its connotation. Sin is imperfect compliance, whether in act or in character resulting from acts, with the moral ideal in so far as this, in the sight of God, is capable of apprehension by the sinner at the time of the activity in question; that non-compliance being due to the free choice of ends of lower ethical worth when higher were possible, and the terms 'moral,' 'apprehension,' &c., being taken in what I have called their "subjective," and what psychologists call their 'psychical' sense. In fewer words, sin is moral imperfection for which an agent is, in the sight of God, accountable.

I have been invited to touch upon social sin, and will conclude with a brief reference to this topic. So far as I can see, social sin is but a collection of personal sins, and social responsibility but the aggregate of individual responsibilities. All that has been said with regard to personal sin can therefore, on this view, be transferred to societies; it is merely a matter of addition or multiplication. It is, however, believed in some quarters that a society is more than an aggregate of individuals, and that it is rather what is termed an organic whole, like an organism. And further, it is sometimes maintained that phrases such as 'social sin' or 'common mind' bespeak not merely consciousness or activity in common, but a mind over and above the sum of individual minds. According to this view the "soul of a people" or "the mind of a nation" are literally accurate, and not merely figurative phrases. But here, perhaps, we need to draw careful distinctions. It may be admitted that a society may be regarded in some sense as an unit, and that the psychology of a society is in some respects different from that of an individual. But the human individual, especially in relation to sin, is a pure abstraction; for personality or individuality involves or implies membership in society, and the human individual, at least, is a social individual. Individual thought and action are certainly affected by intercourse with others; but whether common thought and common action are more than individual thought and action as thus enlarged and modified, is a question. In other words, the issue is, whether there is any such thing as a common or social mind in the same sense that there is an individual mind. This, for my own part, I would deny. All thought must be in some individual mind; and a subject, in the psychological sense of the word, must ever be an individual. A common mind is not only a superfluous conception, in the light of what has just been said about the enlargement of individual experience through social intercourse; it would seem to denote the non-existent. What is 'common,' or 'one,' in social thought, is not the thinkers, or the thinking—these are always separate and distinct—but what is thought. It is but a fallacy, it seems to me, to regard a whole inclusive of units as belonging to the same order as these units. A system of

persons will, of course, be personal; but it is not a person, any more than a constellation is a star. Yet only a person can have a mind. I am therefore inclined to believe that what is called a collective mind is only a mental characteristic evinced by individual minds in consequence of their co-operation and interaction. Society is always what its members make it; and if we speak of the over-individual, or of an over-soul, this can only mean the characteristics of thought in individual minds which are due to the influence of one individual mind upon another, or of many upon one. Truly a society can behave like, or as if it were, an individual; but an individual distinct from its units yet resembling one of them, it is not. I am now handling a controversial question, and cannot do more than argue my own view. But if that view be correct, it will follow that social sin will only differ inessentially from personal sin, *i.e.*, in certain incidental characteristics, and that all social sin is resolvable ultimately into individual sins.

The only important new question, then, which arises when we pass from the sin of the individual to the sin of the society, is that of the propagation or spread of sinfulness in virtue of the solidarity of societies, and ultimately, of the human race, and of what is known as 'social heredity.' Actual sinfulness can only be spread, can only be propagated from one individual to others or from many individuals to one, by the several processes, one side or the other of which is emphasised in such words as 'nurture,' 'imitation,' 'influence.' Of course sinfulness, and indeed morality in general, presuppose society. A moral standard is the outcome of social intercommunion, and its enforcement in our early years is a means by which conscience, or moral discrimination, is educed. We all inherit —physically—the conative elements of which I previously spoke; and in the universal possession of these lies the main explanation of what is called the universality of sin. But social heredity, the influence of nurture and social atmosphere, is another factor in the explanation; and by it alone can sin, as distinct from the non-moral raw material of sin, be propagated through the race. Social sin is therefore both the parent and the child of individual sin.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REPENTANCE.

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The general conception we form as to the experiences centring about what we agree to call Repentance is largely determined by our attitude towards the subject which most persons here have lately been considering—that of Sin. I do not wish to lead my hearers over ground already traversed, and I think I may safely assume that all will agree to take *Sin* as an extremely complex element in the moral and religious consciousness, and will be prepared to say the same of that turning from Sin, to which we give the name of Repentance. Not that the former includes the latter. If we knew all that we could know about sin,—the genesis of the conception, in races or individuals, its relation to legality, custom, morals, and spiritual religion, we should still need further inquiry in order to explain how and why it is that we sometimes experience a reaction in ourselves against what we condemn, and what forces complete or thwart such reaction. I may only remark at starting that here, as in most spheres of ethical and psychological thought, we are bound to follow the analytical method, though acknowledging that in so vast a field, some classes of phenomena, are only too likely to escape our notice. Here, as in all human life, we see, from time to time, sign and symbol put in the place of reality, the material for the spiritual, the trivial for the significant. We shall also see the imperfect developments, which need culture and sometimes repression, and we may come finally to some principles or suggestions useful to the scientific self-director, as well as to the instructor in morals and religion.

In a very general way, repentance may be said to consist in a realization that one has been in the wrong, with a distinct feeling of regret as to past acts or dispositions, and a desire to undo, if possible, the consequences of the action for which repentance is felt. Sometimes desire to avoid bad consequences seems to constitute the larger, sometimes a much smaller, element in the repentance experienced. Perhaps

some would exclude it as heterogeneous: but this aspect of the subject will concern us later on. The attitude of the penitent person may be of four different kinds, which shade off one into another, according as his view of the wrong done is legal, religious, social, or self-regarding. And again his standpoint differs according to his primary concern with isolated acts or general dispositions.

(1) The idea of Law and of obligation to keep the law is very closely connected with those of Sin and Repentance. St. Paul considered that he only knew sin through law, that is, that apart from the conception of legal obligations and sanctions, the word *sin* would, to him, be unmeaning. Where the law and the religious usages of a people are attributed to the same person, or are alike supposed to have been derived from divine authority (as in the case of the laws of Moses or those of Ḥammurabi)[1] the distinction between legal and religious rights and duties is non-existent, and the solemn oath demanded by rulers from their subjects has in some cases given a religious obligation to all secular law. Sin is disobedience to the head of the state, and also to the national deities or deity. True, there is a sphere within which *sin* is regarded as different from *crime*, and where the remedy is not legal punishment but ceremonial purification. But in both these cases, what repentance requires is the removal of a taint or disability which has temporarily shut off the culprit from society and freedom. In the Old Testament, the essence of sin is disobedience to divine command, but disobedience unwittingly committed is more easily condoned.

Repentance in more than an incipient form must, of course, acknowledge the voluntary nature of the sin committed. But the simple, non-introspective man needs some special instruction before the nature of his fault can be brought home to his conscience. This is strikingly shewn in the parable of the rich man and the peasant with his one ewe-lamb, addressed by Nathan to David. Among educated persons at the present day, it is or should be easier to apply at least a similar standard to oneself, and to one's neighbours, yet it is at once pathetic

[1] The Law of Moses knows no forgiveness or condonation for wilful disobedience, *i.e.*, sinning "with a high hand."

and amusing to see how easily most persons condone their own faults. After all they know, as the world cannot, how hard it would have been to avoid them. Here the legal conception of sin may come in as a help to repentance, by bringing the sinner to see that he stands within the area of general condemnation. Yet "Mr. Legality," as in Bunyan's time, so before and after, has often been a hinderer of spiritual religion. The whole penitential system of the Middle Ages, magnificent in its idea of self-examination, of discipline, and of hard-won restoration, was marred in its practical results not only by the partial shifting of responsibility from penitent to priest, but still more by the necessarily outward and material treatment of a life inward and spiritual. So much penance for so many indulgencies in such-and-such sins,—the rules are borrowed from public law and applied to the most private acts and sufferings. The language used as to such discipline became stereotyped and lost real religious significance. It is said to have been a revelation to many, in Renaissance and Reformation times, to learn that *repentance* meant originally something more than ecclesiastical *penance*, and the Greek term—μετάνοια, which would seem inseparable from the idea of a changed mind, came, in books of discipline, to stand for a particular kind of obeissance or prostration. Still, the absence of anything like spiritual discipline in Protestant churches at the present day, implies the removal of a check to unconscious or half-conscious continuance in evil habits. Whether or no its removal in some form or other could be achieved without the usual concomitant dangers we cannot now pause to consider.

(2) We have said that the kind of repentance arising from the realization that one has committed a breach of the law, and so exposed oneself to a penalty is often accompanied by a feeling that one has been guilty of disobedience to the Divine Will. As in some individuals and societies the legal view of sin and repentance tends to oust the religious, in others the fear and love of God prevails over all thought of law and punishment. One need only look to the penitential psalms for illustrations of this aspect, "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." True, the notion of bones broken, and loss of joy and gladness suggest a divinely

sent penalty, but the primary idea of the penitent is that he has become estranged from God, and this enstrangement can only be removed by purification. Of course purification is originally ceremonial only, but it applies to sin as such, as something offensive to God, while crime is an act punishable by the State, and tort is a private injury to be compensated by personal damages.[2] But here again, the complexity of feelings found in almost every penitent is obvious. The misery of being shut off from acts of worship or of conscious communion with God may well be combined with a more selfish distress at having incurred a public penalty or done some social injury, and so put oneself on bad terms with one's neighbours.

(3) Looked at from the social point of view, sin and repentance consist respectively of injury done to others, and of desire to repair that evil. The feeling of regret and self-blame which arises when we are conscious of having done such injury (when it lies outside the scope of the law), may be due simply to a natural human dislike of feeling oneself on an uncertain footing with one's friends, or where there are strong affections, whether for friends, kinsfolk, or for humanity in general, from a genuine smypathetic regret for the person injured. It leads to an impulse to make up for the injury if possible, and to recover the good-will of the sufferer. It is a curious fact in general psychology that the instinct of begging pardon varies immensely in different temperaments. Sometimes the strength of the instinct is connected with superficiality—the offender wishes to extract himself from an unpleasant position as soon as possible —sometimes from an excess of self-depreciation. It can never be said to vary *pari passu* with the depth of sorrow felt by the guilty person. In some cases wish for reconciliation is combined with a certain pride which makes such reconciliation impossible. This brings us to the fourth aspect of our subject —repentance on the self-regarding side.

(4) Although combined, in ordinary life, with regret for breach of the law, neglect of religion, injury to one's neighbour, the most prominent feature in repentance is, perhaps, disgust

[2] The distinction between sin, crime, and tort is, of course, explained by writers on jurisprudence; with special clearness by Maine in his chapter on *Criminal Law* in *Ancient Law*. He shows how the ideas of *sin* and of *tort* must precede that of *crime*.

with one's self. The combination of feelings which leads to entire self-abasement, which prompts the desperate words: "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes," may indicate either a very low or a very high stage of spiritual development. It may spring from a deserved disappointment in a pampered and idolized self. Some religious teachers have pointed out that disgust at a spiritual failure is a bad sign, as proving that one had too high an opinion of one's moral security.[3] On the other hand, certain great souls have seen in complete abhorrence the surest pledge of ultimate beatification. As the author of the *Theologia Germanica* writes:—[4]

> "Christ's soul must needs descend into hell before it ascended into heaven. So must also the soul of man. . . . When a man truly perceiveth and considereth himself, who and what he is, and findeth himself utterly vile and wicked, and unworthy of all the comfort and kindness that he hath ever received from God or from the creatures, he falleth into such a deep abasement and despising of himself, that he thinketh himself unworthy that the earth should bear him, and it seemeth to him reasonable that all creatures in heaven and earth should rise up against him and avenge their Creator on him, and should punish and torment him, and that he were unworthy even of that. . . . Now God hath not forsaken a man in this hell, but He is laying His hand upon him, that the man may not desire nor regard anything but the Eternal Good only, and may come to know that that is so noble and passing good, that none can search out or express its bliss, consolation and joy, peace, rest and satisfaction, and then, when the man neither careth for nor desireth anything but the Eternal Good alone, and seeketh not himself, nor his own things, but the honour of God only, he is made a partaker of all manner of joy, and is henceforth in the Kingdom of Heaven."

These words express, as strongly as is possible in human language, the experience through which some of the greatest saints have passed, an experience which lesser souls have described without having realized it in its full entirety, so that they have thrown over the whole subject of conversion a veil of unreality. Even those who feel interested in the religious experiences of Augustine, Bunyan, and John Newton, would generally regard them as out of the reach of sober, matter-of-fact people of the present age, especially in the element of self-depreciation. Yet there are some modern tendencies in the direction of the lines of experience above delineated, tendencies which we assert in coming together to discuss the psychology of religion.

[3] Notably Dean Goulburn, in his *Thoughts on Personal Religion*, a work once very popular, now comparatively neglected, though the author is certainly strong in religious psychology.

[4] Miss Winkworth's Translation, chap. xi.

I have already suggested that repentance takes different forms according as we regret the committal of certain acts or the existence in us of the dispositions from which such acts proceed. Now such persons as are naturally introspective and at the same time scientific in their habits of thought, will naturally look at acts which they disapprove rather as proofs of ignoble character than as occurrences to be dealt with on their own account, and being accustomed to trace sequence in the whole realm of nature (of which, from the scientific standpoint, human life, with the development of human character, forms part), they will expect the kind of character which produces unsocial or disgraceful actions to go on producing more and more, and to become less and less capable of anything better. If it is in *himself* that a person of this type perceives a gradual deterioration of character, his vision of the future may well present a nightmare which will perpetually haunt him. He need not, to arrive at this state, be a fatalist or determinist pure and simple. He may hold that within certain limits he has the power to determine his own environment and to strengthen his better tendencies. But the limits within which the modification can be made often appear very narrow. None of us can determine our own inherited propensities, nor can we entirely escape from the circumstances which bring out what is worst in our nature. Suppose, then, that some unexpected occurrence reveals to us signs of moral deterioration, are we not in a far worse case than if we had discovered symptoms of premature senility or of congenital insanity? We may hate our faults without seeing any way of escape from them. Self-training might have done something for us if we had begun it earlier, but few begin it soon enough; nor is it much consolation if we reflect that our up-bringing and habits are such that we are not likely to be landed in atrocious crimes. A candidate for examination who is "plucked for general weakness" is no better off than one who makes "howlers" in his papers. And a man or woman who has lost ideals and feels the contracting and lowering influence of an uninspiring life, with slow but sure decline of the faculties which make for social advance and for spiritual development, has a prospect not more encouraging than that of a criminal. Indeed, like

George Eliot's remarkably conceived example of deterioration—Tito Melema—criminality may be added to worthlessness before the end is reached.

I have said that the question here is not the old one between free-will and determinism; a believer in free-will may fear lest his will may collapse when opposed to overwhelming force, and he will not even have the consolation that fate was to blame, not he. And a determinist might count among the forces opposed to deterioration all the powers which make for progress in nature and in society. Still, we may say that the scientific mind is in special danger of falling a prey to lethargic despair when contemplating the possibility of personal degradation, and consequently the impossibility of repentance in any real sense of the word.

To look at the same problem from another point of view: the utility of the Kosmos does not admit the possibility of any forces or the special exercise of any forces, moral or material, ceasing to be or to influence the future, however slight and diffused their operation might become. The vibrations of Homer's harp—if there ever was a Homer and he ever had a harp—are still having some atmospheric effect somewhere, and whatever we may think of the details of Adam and the apple, there is nothing unscientific in the supposition that his eating it might have some effect on his posterity. How vain then to suppose that the effects of our own ungoverned passions or bitter words, merely by an act of repentance on our part, might cease from all effect for ever! The past can never be undone. The wonderful promise that God will "remember" the sins of the penitent no more cannot, in a literal sense, ever be fulfilled, unless the Divine intelligence is to be subjected to limitations.

The answer to this argument lines in an exposition of the essentially figurative or symbolical meaning of any phrase that can possibly be uttered as to the working of the Divine Power or the experiences of the human soul. Might it not be nearer to the truth to say that God transmutes sin rather than He annihilates it—that He does not forget it, but that the Divine Thought of the repentant sinner is of one whose sin is not so much "covered" as turned into not-sin? Leaving apart the Neo-Platonic and the Stoic conceptions of evil as a mere

negation of good, and therefore without real existence, may we not conceive of repentance as an actual mode of ascent? After all, acts as apart from agents, dispositions and characters apart from the particular persons who manifest them, are mere labels with which we try to keep in order our confused conceptions of life and its experiences. If the thought of the "Ladder of St. Augustine" is to be cherished, we may "rise on stepping stones of our dead selves to higher things." But such rising is impossible unless remorse of the hopeless kind is permanently exorcised.

We have certainly now come back, by another route, to the fundamentally religious aspect of sin and repentance, which is almost more essential to the introspective view than it is to the legal or social. It might seem appropriate to consider here the idea of sacrifice in connection with repentance and amendment, but I think this whole department may be relegated to the region of the legal and ceremonial, which has already been considered. As most of us here are specially interested in the subject as connected with religious psychology or the practical direction of souls—chiefly our own—I think it might be more profitable to consider how we ought to deal with the subject of repentance in practical life.

(a) From what has been said just now, it is evident that the feeling of penitence needs to be kept within due bounds, avoiding the extremes of intense remorse and of light-hearted acceptance of blame. We have already noticed how the remorseful soul should be dealt with. Those who feel that "humanly speaking" they have no escape from evil tendencies within, may be reminded that at least in this region we do not entirely keep to "human speech," except in so far as the human touches the divine; but that there is a supernatural power within the reach of those who feel their own weakness. The personal experience of many penitents testifies to this fact, and though moral miracles are not to be lightly accepted on insufficient evidence, yet the soul of man is such a mysterious and little known thing that we are often mistaken, in concrete cases, as to how far its capacities and potentialities may reach. The opposite fault—semi-repentance without very deep regret or energetic movement towards amendment—is commonly found

in every easy-going society. Perhaps the present War, with all its horrors, may help us to attain to an appreciation of the terrible danger of undisciplined affections and thoughtless triviality. Especially it has long seemed to me that the rather exaggerated desire on the part of some of our great grandparents to breed conviction of sin and consequent repentance in young children has been followed by a dangerous reaction. But child-psychology, if it has made educators ready to expect and condone childish faults, has also shown them the need of encouraging a wholesome shame under conviction of falsehood, selfishness, or cruelty. I sometimes wish that both children and adults were taught more, from pulpit and reading desk, about the seven deadly sins, their signs and their fruits. Again, I have hinted at the desirability of something like penitential discipline at the present time. If we are bound not to be too heavily bowed down by our own sins and those of others, we are equally bound not to take them too lightly.

(b) Then again: a good deal of thought should be devoted to the task of maintaining a rational proportion in our estimate of various kinds of wrong-doing. The appreciation of moral good and evil has always differed in the church and the world, and also in various strata of society. The individual, in considering his own conduct, condemning certain acts and allowing excuses for others, is naturally affected by the extent to which the results of his action have had bad consequences. Thus if one has, through carelessness, missed an appointment, and then learns that the person with whom it was made has forgotten it too, self is at once exonerated, though rationally as blameworthy as if the act of carelessness had caused a real disaster. Or if we have said something not strictly true, and then find that our interlocutor has failed to hear it, we commonly, but not reasonably, let ourselves off before the tribunal of conscience. Under this head comes the question of the feeling towards sins for which actual punishment has been inflicted. Children and savages commonly take such punishment as a satisfactory end to the whole affair; those who know human nature are sometimes inclined to withhold punishment lest pity for the offender should drown the sense of wrong done in the community, and of penitence in the culprit. The cultivation of a nice discrim-

ination between venial and serious acts against conscience, especially if such acts are always regarded as symptoms of moral disease rather than as themselves specifically important, is a Christian duty only too often disregarded.

(c) I omit as not an essential part of our subject, though it certainly bears on it very seriously, the question how far the punishment of crime should be used by the State with a view to the amendment of the criminal. The State, as we have already seen, has to do with sins daily in so far as they come under the head of crime, yet to encourage repentance and amendment would soon put an end to most kinds of crime altogether. During the Georgian and early Victorian periods, the deterrent action of criminal law and its execution was considered far more than its reformatory power. Of late, we have had the other side brought prominently forward with regard to juvenile offenders, and we hear of the good things effected by training ships, reformatory schools, and "little commonwealths." It is to be noted, however, that all these reformatory agencies are directed rather to instilling habits of wholesome activity and of sociality than to a promotion of the horror of sin. The same may be said, I suppose, of the Prison Gate Mission. We believe much now-a-days in the transforming power of regular work and discipline. But in the real cases of "turning over a new leaf" something deeper must be called into help, and this work, even if encouraged by the State, is hardly secular, and may wear the form of the noblest missionary activity.

These reflections have necessarily been of a somewhat fragmentary character. The subject is one that seems to fall into fragments as we take it up for discussion, yet there is a unity in it, as man is man everywhere, capable of going astray and capable also of feeling an impetus from without which makes him say: "I will arise and go to my Father." He may be very far from realizing the state of things as expressed by the Prodigal. The course he desires to take will perhaps not even wear, for him, the semblance of a return, as he may not regard himself as belonging by birth to a family and a home, nor may his recovery always appear to him in the light of a Father's forgiveness. The idea of the Divine Forgiveness, though hardly coming within the scope of psychology, is to be con-

sidered hereafter. All that I need say as prelude to the subject is that man can only think of it in terms of the highest forms of human forgiveness, by which the repentant wrong-doer is welcomed back by the brothers and sisters whom he has injured, but who feel that he still belongs to them and they to him. Restoration should, in every Christian society, be the natural sequent to penitence. If it is not always so, is the fault to be found in the inadequacy of the penitence felt and expressed, or in unwillingness on the part of the respectable "elder brother" to rejoice in the recovery of one who "was lost and is found"?

THE WEAKENING OF THE SENSE OF SIN.

By the Rev. Neville Talbot, M.A., M.C., Assistant Chaplain General.

I think it is well at the outset of this discussion to challenge ourselves with the question, whether our willingness to recognise a common weakening of *the sense of sin* is mixed with or springs from a desire to minimize the importance and dreadfulness of *sin*. We are all agreed, I imagine, as to the fact of the weakening (though I suspect that we too readily presuppose times during which the sense of sin was satisfactorily strong). Are we agreed in regretting the weakening? Is our aim in this discussion to find how the sense of sin may be recovered in power or in some degree to justify and perpetuate its weakness?

At any rate it may help the discussion if I try to state the point of view from which I approach the subject. Briefly, I confess that I have come to have little sympathy with those who would lessen or mitigate the 'sinfulness of sin.' Yet, as privileged to study human nature at the front, I am none the less impatient of any refusal to recognise the positive excellence and goodness which is in men, sin notwithstanding. It has become by now a commonplace, yet it remains a gospel of great joy, that the war has revealed and evoked in the mass of our fellow-men a rich wealth of great-heartedness. In face of this goodness one is either tempted to soften down such assertions that "we can do no good thing without Thee," or impelled to embrace the conviction that the Holy Spirit has

been and is working outside the limits which are drawn by our grudging and ecclesiastical minds. At the front we have not only—for purposes of common comfort—got to 'look on the bright side,' but we have deep reasons for so doing. We are summoned to discern as a sign of the times goodness in others, and to be critical of whatever is depreciative of human nature. Yet, when I have said this, as I want to do with great emphasis, I find that the experience implied does not lessen but increases my sense of the tragedy of sin. The new vision of human goodness is also a new vision of how the goodness is intermingled with evil. The more one glories in human excellencies the deeper grows one's sorrows for their waste and abuse. The more one is drawn to sinners, the more one hates sin. I therefore write this paper as one who regrets the weakening of the sense of sin and who longs that it should be recovered in power. I believe that little in the end has been accomplished by attempts to explain or explain away sin in terms of imperfection, or ignorance, or determination by environment. A great multiplication of knowledge and the consequent command by men of the material means of life are characteristic of the times in which we live. This fact does but expose the more clearly weakness and perversity at the centre—the weakness of the will. Our main trouble lies within us, not without. Our moral power has been outrun by the increase in our knowledge. We moderns lack morale. I therefore approach the subject of this discussion with the belief that *sin as the wilful devotion to self of those who are made for Another and for others,* is the central and root tragedy of life. I should wish for myself to be beware of easy talk and indulgent thinking about it, and if I may I would wish the same for others.

Nevertheless, there is the problem of the weakening of the sense of sin. It is futile to think to treat of it merely by speaking vigorously of sin. It is unamenable to scolding. The problem is that men are sick of a perpetual harping upon sin. Reaction from harping will not be corrected by further harping. The Church has partly defeated her own object and created some of the difficulty which she would overcome, by resting satisfied with a testimony to the sinfulness of sin in season and out of season, whether men would hear or whether

they would forbear. Her task is not only to denounce, but to understand. I think I need not say much to substantiate the fact that the sense of sin in our general soul is weak. I resist the temptation, which is common to all men, to quote Sir Oliver Lodge on the point. Rather I would ask whether there is anyone who is without the experience of having his sense of sin surpassed by the strength of the language in which we are invited to express it. Do we not sometimes demur to saying every day and twice a day that "there is no health in us?" We often find a stumbling block to reality and sincerity in the superlatives of "I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, my own fault, my own grievous fault." We find it hard to fill out with adequate honesty the declaration that "the burden of sin is intolerable." If these demurrers of ours are not very heartfelt about ourselves, they certainly are more so about others. The first fact for us about our neighbours is not that they are miserable sinners, but men and brethren. The first fact for a chaplain to a squadron of the R.A.F. is not that they are lost sheep, but very wonderful children (though he would not have *them* be aware of it). Thus the question rises, perhaps about ourselves, more certainly about others, whether the face of man has not been blackened by Christian tradition. I remember being startled when reading Wesley's Journal by a sentence in which he referred in his stride to the fact that men were by nature the children of the devil. On the other hand, I recall the remark of a friend in the Student Movement. Before entering the Ministry of the Congregational Church he went for a tour in India. He told me that he was so smitten by the evil look on some Brahmin faces—and in particular the face of one man opposite to him in a railway carriage—that he could not thrust from himself the words, 'Ye are of your father the devil.' There is also the interesting admission of Warde-Fowler at the end of his "Religious experience of the Roman people." Having burrowed deeply into the world of Mediterranean religions he turned, at the end of his labours, once more to St. Paul's epistles. He says (I cannot quote) that he seemed to understand as never before St. Paul's favourite metaphor of contrast between light and darkness—as in 'Once ye were darkness but

now are ye light in the Lord.' Nevertheless, I think we cannot dismiss the fact that men are repelled from traditional Christianity by the thought that it keeps on looking at the dark side of men and things, and is more concerned with failure than excellence. The man who said in my hearing: 'as soon as I see the padre's dog-collar, I begin to think of my sins,' was not only obdurate. He was also disappointed. He had looked—perhaps vaguely, perhaps listlessly—for a light and had been met, as he thought, by a dark lantern. The girl who flung away the 'pi-book' given her by her school mistress, in which she found the injunction for the early morning hour —'as you dress think about your sins,' had an appetite for what was living, and therefore a repugnance from what was morbid. There is undoubtedly an alienation—shall we say a healthy alienation?—of many people from Christianity, as from clerical clothes, as being dark, and sad, and ugly. We must allow that sin which seizes every excuse to justify or palliate itself is at work here, but we have also to admit that Christianity, as it has come to be presented to men, is needlessly repulsive.

Granted, then, the weakening of a sense of sin and a restiveness under (not to say a revolt from) the language in which the sense is to be expressed, how are they to be accounted for? The raising of this question is like the meeting place of many roads which all invite exploration. I must keep steadfastly to one track. The main and, I fear, commonplace answer is that the weakening of the sense of sin is in direct ratio with the weakening of the sense of the reality of God. Except in relation to God (and to other people) the sense of sin is only selfish regret and morbid remorse. It is only a mood of 'the morning after.' A vital sense of sin can only be found in those who have God in their thoughts. If, then, we ask whether He is in men's thoughts to-day or what they have in their minds about Him, the answer, I think, must be that they have Him little in their thoughts. This answer may be interpreted, both hopefully and unhopefully; hopefully by those who see in it signs of a healthy criticism of conceptions of God which have been in men's minds—a movement, in fact, of *recul pour mieux sauter;* unhopefully by those who detect that the common mind is deeply sunk in materialism and

mean pre-occupations. There is, I feel, much to be said for both interpretations.

(a) The thoughts of God which have been in men's minds and linger there, from which, too, they react, are unlovely and unconstraining thoughts. They are of God, as angry, as arbitrary, as magisterial, as spying out evil, and—above all—as too easily vindicated in face of the evil in the world. There is a weakening to-day of the sense of sin, but there is a strengthening of the sense of the *problem* of evil, both physical and moral. If sorrow for sin is lacking, *Weltschmerz* is not. This can be exaggerated, but it cannot be neglected. The mind of the average man in arms is often doubtless stagnant (and necessarily so?), but it is overshadowed by the sense that the world is awry and that the accepted explanations of the fact are thin. This sense is as a veil which hangs between men and God. Speaking with the roughness of generalisation, I should say that the dominant note of what must be called modern thought is the conviction that the blame for the evil in the world has been too exclusively attributed to man, that too much has been made of his guilt. The thing can be put blasphemously, but it has to be put. The vindication of God by traditionalists preter-naturally certain as to how evil came into the world with the devil and with Adam, does not convince. I think it is impossible to begin as fairly and squarely as St. Paul begins in the Romans: "God is angry, because what may be known about him is plain to men's inmost consciousness; for He Himself has made it plain. For, from the very creation of the world, His invisible perfections—namely, His eternal power and divine nature—have been rendered intelligible and clearly visible by His works, so that these *men are without excuse.*" That is a very difficult starting point for many men to-day. We do not share in St. Paul's inherited certainty about God, nor in his consequent jealousy for the Divine righteousness. We do not live in a world of which the origins are so definitely close and clear-cut as they were to him. We come up to his starting point, carrying with us that increase in "the burden of the mystery of all this unintelligible world" which the recent unrolling of man's history has laid upon the soul. We have, many of us, at

times and for a time, been victims of a Post-Darwinian cosmic desolation. We cannot start with St. Paul's "God is angry." We recoil. It is no credit to us, it is no discredit to St. Paul. Both he and we share inevitably in the mind of our time. Were he with us here he would feel as we do, that the approach to Christianity is not so simple as it appears at the beginning of *Romans*. With no equally clear-cut certainty about the origin of evil, he would carry with us the pain of its problem—the problem of pain and not only of sin—up to the Cross.

(b) It is also true that God is little in men's thoughts at all. Not that they are atheists. The average man—I speak of Britishers—is not atheist. He is not nearly rationalist enough for that. What I mean is that the thought of God is not mixed with the practical habit of mind with which men go about their daily work. I will not labour this. An illustration will suggest sufficiently what I mean. I expect that all my hearers are familiar with Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son*. I cannot look it up out here, but a phase in the lives there portrayed has stuck in my memory. The two parents and Edmund were living, I think, in Clapham. The latter recalls that they were scarcely, if ever, quite well. He also recalls that the chronic malaise from which they suffered was simply and resignedly accepted by his parents as coming to them immediately and directly from God's hand. (You will remember the figure by which he describes the environment of his childhood. He lived, he said, in a deep well, from the bottom of which he looked right up to the very throne of God Himself). Edmund says, in retrospect, that he has little doubt that the reason for the malaise was bad drains and shut windows. There we have two habits of mind. One immediately aware (as it were vertically aware) of the great First Cause. The other concerned (as it were laterally concerned) with the manipulation of secondary causes. The latter habit of mind as a practical philosophy is widespread. Our souls are wrapt in a web of causal connections, and the web is a veil which hides God. He does not seem to come in. He has made us upright—fit to aspire to Him, and to give to Him and receive from Him—but we have sought out many inventions. I know that in the world of philosophy there are welcome

movements of thought on foot, which will help to emancipate men from the practical materialism and determinism at which I have hinted. I know that the philosophy of science is at work to repair its own ravages. But the common mind in which we all share lies still in the meshes of a *practical* atheism. I feel tempted to discuss this further, but I refrain. I will only add that if God is out of mind as He is, it does not mean that men do not fear Him. Rather they are inspired with the wrong sort of fear of Him—the fear of the unknown, and that fear does not issue in godly sorrow for sin. Men are not sorry for the self-devotion of that which should be God-devoted, for God lies back outside the orbit of their business and pleasure. That is the main way in which I account for the weakening of the sense of sin.

Before I pass to the remedy for this weakness, I would add that weakness in the sense of the reality of God carries with it concomitantly a depreciation in human values. I think there was truth in Chesterton's analysis of Dickens' power to impel the public mind to attack the abuses which he exposed. Chesterton accounted for the impulse by deriving it from Dickens' powerfully vital and Christian sense of the infinite value of every man, woman, and child. If man is in the mud it is a god who is in the mud, and he is utterly worth rescuing. By contrast Chesterton felt that modern sociology is less certain of the value of the victims to be rescued and is, therefore, for all its enlightenment and interest, lacking in impulse to set others rushing to the rescue. Certainly the very strength of the old language about sin is a testimony to the high dignity and inherent worth of man. The depth of his degradation is evidence of the height of his potentiality. He is tremendously capable either way. I think this sense—the sense of wonder at human possibility—has weakened concomitantly with the sense of the reality of God who made man for Himself. With a like concomitance we have lost—we Britishers at any rate—we have lost, or we are without, a sense of wonder, of gratitude, of praise. We live in an impersonal world which we interpret in a neuter vocabulary. We commonly live in towns whence wonder has fled. We are not as shepherds (I recall an anecdote) who alone at night on the hillside hear the sheep coughing and

are made to think of their sins. I think in truth that it may reasonably be asked whether a weakness of the sense of sin often does not mean the lack of a vivid sense of anything. I write from the front, and I must make allowance for the callousness which war demands. Insensibility is a saving ingredient in military morale. But I also write from behind the front where there is much dullness and less excuse for insensibility. There is no doubt that part of the religious problem of our country is that if a man is fairly busy, and is also securely housed, clothed, and fed, he is astoundingly ἀπαθητικος—insensible to all else. Russia may fall, Italy may reel, but he does not mind. He carries on.

But I am being tempted to stray. I return to my muttons, to finding a remedy for the weakened sense of sin for which I have tried to account. I derive the weakness of a sense of sin from a weakened or weak sense of the reality of God—and I see that certain consequences follow. The remedy is, to be renewed in the latter sense. Obviously I have raised here a complex of questions of which I can scarcely treat at all. But if I am asked: Briefly, what is your remedy? I reply: The remedy is to gum up the beginning of the Old Testament to start with, to seize the writer of the book of Job, the psalmists and the prophets by the hand as living men, to realise their faith in God, mixed (in virtue of its very ardour) with doubt and questioning, and so to come up to Christ. *There is* sin. Let us be satisfied with that, and let us be determinedly agnostic as to how it got there. As Waggett said once, a pig is in the garden, it doesn't matter *primarily* how the pig got in, but how to get him out. (It may prove secondarily that the knowledge of how he got in will help to get him out). Let us refrain, too, from bringing in at the beginning *diabolus ex machinâ*. Let us embrace afresh the optimism given to the Jew by which he came to believe that man is made for God and for goodness, but actually finds himself not himself, but rather his own enemy and traitor. And let this optimism with its tragic sensitiveness be reinforced by all the strength of willing admiration that 'the boys' at the front have evoked. So let us come to Christ with our double trouble, outer and inner. Stretching out on the one hand to pierce the veil lying

over our hearts, the veil which hides God from man: bringing on the other hand the sense of our hearts own bitterness. Let us at the same time both hold to the *a priori* conviction that God, if He be God, is holy, and hold fast our own, or at least other people's integrity, and refuse to let it go.

Thus let us come to Jesus, and bathe as never before in His conception of the Father (our Glover in our hands?) Let us be renewed in wonder at His illumination of man's face, at His positive trust in human capacity to respond to His call and to co-operate in His venture. Let us regain His vision of human potentiality. And only so let us come to appreciate again His disappointment corresponding in its vehemence to the intensity of His expectation. Only so let us try again the flawless edge of His moral judgment on men as He saw them pass under a test too much for their metal. Only so let us emphasize His experience of the personal powers of evil which wait to tempt and sift men. Only so let us pass to the hour of tragedy at which even His nearest friends, counted upon for companionship, were unable to watch with Him one hour.

Treading this historic way of the Cross, we shall savour something of the bitterness of Peter's tears in the porch. And if so, we shall come, by steps which I will not trace here, to be overwhelmed afresh by the revelation of the tragedy as seen in terms, not only of disloyalty of disciples to their Master, but in terms of wounds inflicted on the Father's heart. We shall come to see God crucified, and seeing Him we shall abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes.

By this road, which I have only sketched in with few and flying strokes, is the remedy for a weakened sense of sin come by. And more. If by our entering into the past our weakened sense of sin is revived, it will receive added intensity in whatever degree we realise that in the present God suffers in the suffering of His little ones, in whatever degree we are open to the lessons of solidarity and see what selfishness like ours does to others, in whatever degree we measure our own sin in the terms of others degradation,—in whatever degree we are aware of the perpetual 'passion of God.'

I confess that in travelling thus I have come to round upon my quarrel with the traditional language about sin. I reach a

point at which no expression can be too strong. But I reach it. I do not start from it. I have to travel to the Cross with Jesus, till in Him the deepest of all questions—the question of God—is asked and in Him is resolved, till the veil is lifted, till the vision of God breaks in and evokes the violent and saving revulsion in which joy and sorrow are mingled. In other words the question is one of order, and of the proportion of faith. The sense of sin, in its purifying power, follows upon the recognition firstly of what God is and what He desires, and secondly of what man is as the object of God's love. I think that in the course of the Christian generations use and wont have led to an inversion of the order, and to a misplacement of the emphasis of the Christian message. Morbidity and self-occupation have eaten into the vitality and outwardness of its glorious good news. The thirst of the soul *for God* must be satisfied with living water before the soul can bathe in the purifying stream and be clean. We must see the Lord before we can fall at His feet as dead.

As to sin itself, frankly I feel that the light which shines on the face of the Lord when lifted up upon the Tree, is too penetrating, the days we live in too tremendous, the men around us too wonderful, for anyone to indulge in minimising thought or language about it. We are sick with a sickness all the worse for being suppressed. It must be eradicated. We are infected by a poison which needs expulsion. Men need a light to break into the fog in which they slither and stagnate; they need a fire to sting and to consume: they need kindling with an equal violence of hatred of sin and love for sinners: they need rescue, recovery, deliverance: they need to come to themselves and to enter into their royal birthright—that in a glorious and joyful liberty their infinite powers may be used in the service of God's new creation, in co-operation with His holy and perfect will, and in response to His well-nigh incredible love.

I am very sorry that circumstances have made it impossible for me to read this paper myself to you, and to enjoy the pleasure of being at your discussions and conference. May I say that if my thoughts arouse interest, agreement or opposition, it will be a consolation to me to be allowed to share in the same through the medium of letters?

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FORGIVENESS.

By the Rev. E. C. Dewick, M.A., Principal of St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead.

"Sin is a nuisance to the systematic thinker." So said Dr. Figgis, as Hulsean Lecturer, from the University pulpit of Great St. Mary's, in 1910. And to some extent, the same might be said of forgiveness. For forgiveness, like sin, does not submit readily to the analysis of accurate scientific thinking; it is an elusive, indefinable thing, which as soon as analysed, seems to lose its real self. The attempt to explain forgiveness by means of psychology is like the attempt to explain a poem by analysing its grammatical structure; however complete and accurate the analysis, there will remain over 'something more'; and it is this 'something more' which constitutes the true essence of the poem. So our study of the psychology of forgiveness, however useful up to a point, can at most introduce us to certain aspects of a great subject. There will always remain 'something more.'

The term 'forgiveness,' as commonly cited in modern speech, comes to us with a long train of associations. Especially are these associations drawn from the English Bible; and although the Biblical doctrine of forgiveness does not strictly fall within the province of this paper, a few points call for brief comment, because they bear upon the main development of the idea in human thought.

'Forgiveness' in the Old Testament is the English rendering of three Hebrew roots:—to cover *(kipper)*, to let go *(salaḥ)*, and to take away *(nasa)*; and all of these suggest the same idea, viz., *the removal or cancellation of the intention to punish.* It is almost always *God's* forgiveness which the Old Testament writers have in view. Forgiveness from man to man is rarely contemplated; indeed, so long as the *Lex Talionis* dominated the ethical standard, and 'justice' between man and man was emphasized as the supreme moral necessity, there seemed little place left for human forgiveness.[1]

[1] The *term* 'forgiveness' is scarcely ever applied to human conduct in the Old Testament; but the *idea* is occasionally found—*e.g.*, in the story of Joseph's treatment of his brethren.

In the New Testament, however, the concept of Divine forgiveness is enriched, and the duty of forgiveness from man to man is closely linked with it. God's forgiveness is no longer merely the legal or forensic annulling of a penalty,[2] though this element is still present, and underlies some of the Greek words used (ἀφιήμι, καλύπτω, &c.); but a new aspect comes to the front, namely, *the restoration of friendship by an act of initiative on the part of the injured person.* The word χαρίζομαι (frequently rendered 'forgive' in the English Bible) suggests this; and the Parable of the Prodigal Son clearly sets it forth.

Forgiveness, then, as Christ taught it, is something more than the decision not to punish; it involves the *restoration of close personal and spiritual relationships*, after a friendship has been broken by a quarrel. To 'let a man off,' and then abstain from intercourse with him, is not forgiveness, in the Christian sense of the term.

It was in the full, personal sense that our Lord proclaimed Divine forgiveness to be a living reality, and human forgiveness an imperative duty. By precept and parable He laid such stress on these two truths, and linked them so closely together that this has been called in Seeley's well-known phrase, 'Christ's most striking innovation in morality.'

Now the act of forgiveness, as we have said, may be ascribed either to man or to God. The psychological study of Divine forgiveness is difficult, because the mind of God is not directly accessible to our investigation. We are limited, therefore, either to study the *effects* of Divine forgiveness, as seen in its reception by the human soul, or else to form a conception of the Divine act by analogy, from our knowledge of the human mind.

Moreover, while it is the function of psychology to take note of the phenomena of 'forgiven-ness' in human experience, it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, for psychology, as a pure science, to judge whether the ultimate source of these can be traced to an objective Divine act, or only to processes at work within the 'larger self' which seems to underlie the conscious personality of each of us. The reality of the psychological experiences may be established beyond question by scientific

[2] Sometimes—*e.g.*, in the 51st Psalm, the Old Testament rises to a level worthy of the New

study; but our *interpretation* of them will depend ultimately on our general view of life—which, in pre-war days, we called our 'Weltanschauung.'

Moreover, even human forgiveness, though more 'accessible' to the psychologist, is not without its perplexing features. For forgiveness appears to be essentially an act of *free-will*, of *initiative*, and of *creative power*. Let us recall our own psychological experience, when about to forgive someone. In the act of forgiving, more perhaps than in any other act, we seem to ourselves to be *challenging* and *changing* the normal course of events, and to be creating a new situation. Nothing is harder for us than to forgive; while we are trying to 'make up our mind to it,' all the laws of our being, the considerations of our reason, and our sense of strict justice, seem to bar the way. But if the deed is done, and the forgiveness has been offered and accepted;—then we seem to have 'broken through' into a new world of friendship, which our own effort of will has created. And this is true also from the point of view of the person forgiven; for to him it seems as if something had 'broken in' upon the natural course of his sin and estrangement, and given him a liberty and a friendship beyond his own attainment.

But if this is true—if forgiveness is really a free, initiative, creative act on the part of the forgiver,—then it offers a baffling problem to the psychologist. For psychology "simply stops dead," to use William James' phrase, before the idea of free-will, which "is insoluble on strictly psychological grounds."[8]

If forgiveness could be explained simply as the product of antecedent psychological causes;—if it were (say) simply 'an appropriate reaction to an external stimulus imposed on the brain'—then it would offer no obstacle to exhaustive psychological study. But such an explanation would resolve the whole concept of forgiveness into an illusion; for a forgiveness that is inevitable, and not free, is no true forgiveness at all.

Forgiveness also offers difficulties when approached from the ethical side; for it appears to conflict with the principles of justice. "It is not fair to treat a man who has done wrong on the same footing of friendship as one who has kept steadily to

[8] *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii., pp. 570, 576.

the path of rectitude"—so said (in effect) the Elder Brother; and so say many in our own day. Nor can we reply that the protest rests on a misunderstanding of the true nature of forgiveness; for often its power does in truth consist just in this—that it goes beyond the requirements of justice; it is an offer of terms which could not legally be demanded, and of friendship which could not by right be claimed.

Hence we find that there are some thinkers who reject the whole idea of forgiveness as both impossible and immoral; impossible, because contrary to the law of cause and effect; and immoral, because contrary to the law of justice.[4]

It is probably impossible to disprove such a contention, which is a logical outcome of a deterministic view of the universe. Only, let us remember that in this connection determinism sweeps away, not only some dogmas of religion relating to the Atonement, but also some beliefs of common life relating to human friendships. If forgiveness is ruled out as a mere illusion, our conceptions of human life and human nature (to say nothing of the Divine nature) will be grievously impoverished. How much home-life would suffer, if there were no forgiveness possible! Surely the alternative view, that forgiveness is a reality, even if it be hard to justify by pure reasoning, at least does less violence to human experience as a whole.

Moreover, if viewed as part of a theistic and Christian interpretation of life, some of the apparent difficulties in the idea of forgiveness become less. The initial 'will to forgive,' for instance, on the part of the injured person, though it seems to run contrary to all the tendencies set in motion by the quarrel, and to 'break across' them with startling abruptness, may yet be not so arbitrary or inexplicable as it seems, if behind it, "woven into the very texture of the universe," is the forgiveness of God, as its primal source. And for the Christian,

[4] *cf.* several quotations from modern writers, given by Dr. Figgis, in *The Gospel and Human Needs*, pp. 106-108:

"There can be no such thing as the forgiveness of sins; the law of consequences forbids such a thing." (Crapsey, in *The New Dogmatic*).

"Forgiveness is a beggar's refuge; we must pay our debts." (Bernard Shaw).

Dr. Figgis also cites the teaching of George Eliot, who constantly insists on the inevitableness of retribution, and the impossibility of 'undoing' the past.

who believes that in Christ there is to be found the secret of life's problems, the perplexing conflict between justice and forgiveness is, after all, only a part of the great paradox which runs through the whole life and teaching of the Master, and reaches its climax on the Cross;—that Cross which seems so unjust, and which yet has proved itself so full of attractive power to the moral and spiritual nature of man.

While we have contended that forgiveness cannot be wholly explained by means of known scientific laws, we are far from suggesting that it is a merely arbitrary or lawless act, dependent wholly on the whim of the forgiver. Even the initial 'will to forgive' stands rooted, as we have seen, in the Love of God. In some cases, too, it may be in part explained psychologically, by the tendency of the mind to 'swing back' after the first outburst of exaggerated anger to a more stable equilibrium. When we 'recover ourselves' after a quarrel, we often feel that a continued refusal to forgive would be both unreasonable and unjust. It is true that often this explanation of the act of forgiveness is inadequate by itself; in the case of the more striking acts of forgiveness, some deeper cause must be sought; but it is an element in the process which deserves to be borne in mind.

Once given the initial 'will to forgive' on the part of the injured person, the subsequent course of forgiveness tends to follow fairly well-marked lines, and to be subject to conditions which are ascertainable by scientific study; although an element of uncertainty, due to the uncertain volition of the person to be forgiven, can never be wholly eliminated.

The first pre-condition of forgiveness is the mutual recognition of the fact that a breach of friendship exists, and ought to be remedied. Forgiveness is incompatible with a satisfied acceptance of the *status quo*.

Next, there must be, on the part of the injured person, 'forgivingness,' or the will to forgive. Apart from this, no effort on the part of the person who has done the wrong can bring about forgiveness. This 'forgivingness' is not to be confused with mere good nature, or an indifference to the claims of justice. It is rather a deliberate desire to promote the highest and most lasting welfare of the forgiven person, through the

medium of restored friendship. The *forms* in which 'forgivingness' may express itself will vary according to circumstances; often it will involve the cancellation of punishment; sometimes, however, true forgiveness will involve the imposition of punishment,—but if so, the punishment will be remedial, and not vindictive, in its purpose.

But 'forgiveness,' before it can become effectual, must be met by 'receptiveness,' or 'faith,' on the part of the person to be forgiven. Otherwise the 'forgivingness' will be, as it were, suspended and impotent. This receptiveness involves a repentance, or change of mind and outlook; for so long as the will is 'leaning towards' the old sin, and the perpetuation of the quarrel, it cannot at the same time be 'leaning towards' the friendship which is being offered.

In this sense, it might be said that repentance, or conversion, on the part of the sinner, is a condition of forgiveness. But it is important to remember that in most cases, this is subordinate to, and often created by, the antecedent offer of forgiveness. To regard this offer as the response of the injured person to the repentance of the sinner is to invert the whole process of forgiveness, and to conceive of it after the manner of a commercial transaction, in which the repentance is the payment in advance, and the forgiveness the reward thus earned by right. In such a case (to use St. Paul's words), "Grace would be no longer grace," and forgiveness would cease to be its true self.

All this is true alike of Divine forgiveness, and of forgiveness between man and man. In the New Testament, the coming of Christ is set forth as God's initial offer of forgiveness to man:—"God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God took the first step; He did not wait for us to turn to Him. "We do not become good in order that we may be forgiven; we are forgiven in order that we may become good." This insistence on the predominant importance and precedence of God's initial act underlies the whole Pauline theology of the Atonement, and of justification by faith.

Now, if the initial secret of Redemption lies in God's willingness to forgive, we can understand why Christ insists so often, by precept and parable, on human 'forgivingness,' and links it, in

so close and novel a way, with that of God. For each act of forgiveness on our part reflects, in its measure, the Divine act of Redemption, and like it, is pregnant with the power to awaken new life. Through human 'forgivingness,' God's forgiveness is transmitted to the world.

No doubt it will sometimes happen that the offer of forgiveness will be refused. The will of the person to be forgiven is not enforced, and there is no certainty that the response will be made. Not every soul responds to God's forgiveness, however clearly realised; and it is not likely that human efforts will meet with a more universal success. But normally, a response of friendship is the most natural psychological 'reaction' to an offer of friendship. It is the line of least resistance for the will; for most of us know that when we have refused an offer of forgiveness, it has cost us a real effort, and a sense of striving against a constraining influence.

Nothing is so potent to awaken true repentance as the free offer of forgiveness; and to withhold this offer for fear that it might be rejected is to neglect one of the greatest creative opportunities in the human soul. And of this we may be sure—that if the offer is refused, the *forgiver* will lose nothing in God's sight; for the *will* to forgive on our part is the guarantee of our capacity to receive forgiveness from God.

When the will to forgive is met by the response of faith, the result is, as we have said, a new situation. Even in human forgiveness, it is difficult to exaggerate the sense of 'newness' which sweeps over our spiritual life as soon as a reconciliation has taken place. In the phenomena of conversion, the 'sense of forgiveness,' takes a leading place;[5] and to those who have experienced it, it appears to be a pure 'miracle.' If by 'miracle' we mean an act of the Divine will moving on a plane different from the ordinary laws of science, the term is rightly used in this connection.

It is difficult for physical science to recognize the claim of forgiveness to be able to annul the past, and to create a future

[5] See (*e.g.*) the interesting tables of statistics in Starbuck's *Psychology*, from which it appears that this experience is specially associated with revivals, and is more frequent with *males* than with females.

which is not merely the product of past and present causes. Yet it has been pointed out that this 'retrospective' influence of love (and forgiveness is but a manifestation of love under special circumstances) finds a parallel in the realm of art.[6] The opening stages of a drama, for instance, or of an oratorio, may be, at a certain moment of time, completed, and therefore (in a sense) irrevocably fixed as past events. Yet their real *value* is not yet determined; for this depends upon the later stages of the music or the drama. It is only when we are able to look back upon this as a whole, that we are able truly to appraise the significance of the introductory section, with its apparent discords or incompletenesses. So it is not contrary to the experience of the artist (whatever the physical scientist may say), that forgiveness should, as it were, 'throw back' a transforming influence over past sins, so that their after-effects, which would otherwise have been inevitable, are cancelled and done away.

But although Art, rather than Psychology, may help us towards an understanding of a problem such as the above, Psychology throws light on some of the elements in the experience of forgiveness. For instance, the mysterious suddenness, with which the sense of forgiveness often 'breaks in' upon the soul, may be, in part, the climax of a long sub-conscious preparation. We know that in human life, it is often possible to prepare the way for an explicit offer of forgiveness by skilful 'suggestions,' which are not consciously recognised as such by the person to be forgiven, but which none the less influence his 'deeper self,' and prepare the way for a favourable response at the critical moment. So, underlying the sudden 'outcrop' of the sense of forgiveness, there may often be a long process of education below the surface of consciousness.

We have spoken of the 'will to forgive,' and the appropriate response to this, as the only *essential* conditions of forgiveness. What place, then, is left for those ceremonial or sacramental acts, which, both within and without the Christian Church, have played no small part in traditional theories of forgiveness? What, for instance, is the relation to forgiveness of Baptism, Absolution, and Penance, in the 'Catholic' type of Christianity?

[6] See (*e.g.*) Temple, *Mens Creatrix*.

Now it is obvious that external influences have a considerable psychological effect on the soul. We all know, for instance, how a work of art, a book, a piece of music, may help to create a spiritual receptiveness and even a consciousness of the Presence of God. Hence there is nothing unreasonable in the supposition that external ceremonies, such as the rite of Baptism or the reading of a form of absolution, may so 'bring home' to the soul, estranged from God, the reality of God's offer of forgiveness, so that the soul will respond with a new effort of faith, and the forgiveness will become effectual. Just as the common paper and ink, with which a human message of forgiveness is written, may be the 'conditions' by means of which the message becomes effective; so the water of Baptism, or the formula of Absolution, may be truly the conditions of an effectual forgiveness from God to man. Christian experience, indeed, bears witness that this is often the case.

On the other hand, if the formula or ceremony is regarded as 'containing' and 'controlling' forgiveness, in such a way that it is directly transmitted to the soul (as if by a quasi-material channel), and cannot normally be transmitted apart from the external rite;—this is a theory unsupported (at least on its negative side) by experience, and in accordance with no established psychological principles. Forgiveness is the free gift of God, dependent only upon His love; and to restrict its working to the use of certain formularies or ceremonies is to revert from the liberty of true religion to the bondage of magic and superstition.

The idea that Penance is a 'condition' of forgiveness needs to be even more carefully guarded. So long as Penance is treated simply as a wholesome discipline, by means of which the soul is strengthened and disposed to faith; well. But if it is regarded as a *quid pro quo*—a payment which we must make to God, before He will repay us with the forgiveness we have thus earned—then the root-idea of forgiveness as a free gift is poisoned at its source.

In what sense is the death of Christ a 'condition' of our forgiveness by God? That is a vast problem, which it is obviously impossible to discuss adequately here. All of us would probably agree that certain theories of the Atonement

are profane; notably those which seemed to suggest that during all the ages before A.D. 29 or 30, God was unapproachable and unappeasable, but after that date suddenly changed his disposition, and became gracious and forgiving.

At all costs, the unchangeableness of God's love must be safeguarded. On the other hand, if we have learned "to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," we shall not readily be satisfied with viewing Christ's death simply as a beautiful example of self-sacrifice, well-fitted to evoke our admiration and imitation. If "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," then Calvary is not merely a human incident; it is a *picture of God;* nay more, it is an *act* of God. And as such, it not only reveals God's forgiveness; it actually makes His forgiveness effectual. True, God is eternally forgiving, because He is eternally love. But in human experience, a forgiving disposition only becomes effective when the *word* of forgiveness has been spoken, or the *message* of forgiveness written. Such acts are both declaratory and effective; they reveal that which is pre-existent, and they create something *new*. So Calvary not only revealed God's eternal love, but also created (and is continually creating) a new situation, in every heart to which God has given His message through Christ crucified; for this message makes forgiveness effectual and real.

One other question, on which I would touch briefly, ere I close, has been brought to the front by the war situation. Is *individuality* a condition of forgiveness, or can forgiveness be a social or national matter? The answer is bound up with the question: Is there such a thing as a 'corporate personality?' If there is not, then forgiveness between *nations* is an impossibility; for an 'impersonal forgiveness' is a contradiction in terms. Only, it is well to remember, that if national forgiveness is inherently impossible, a national *refusal* to forgive is equally impossible. For it is meaningless to say that we refuse to do something which lies outside our powers.

But if the phrase 'corporate personality' stands (as many think) for something real, though little understood in our present stage of knowledge, then corporate and national forgiveness is not an unthinkable concept. And in this

connection, one point deserves to be borne in mind. To-day, men are seeking for a religion which can mould and uplift, not only individual souls, but also social, national, and international life. If, then, modern Christianity avows that the message of forgiveness (which is very near to the heart of Christ's Gospel) cannot be applied to social and international problems, it will surely seem to be acquiescing in its own incompetence to satisfy the ideals of the younger generation, or to guide them in their plans for the rebuilding of society. On the other hand, there is the vision—some will say it is only a dream—that some day there may be a nation so filled with the mind and message of Christ, that for His sake it will be willing to make a great venture—committing itself to an offer of forgiveness and friendship towards an enemy nation by which it has been wronged;—not from motives of weakness, or weariness, or rashness, but because God has shewn us in His Son that this is the way of redemption and of life. "Too great a risk!" some will say; "Too trustful of human nature!" Perhaps. But is it more trustful than God's act in the Incarnation? or more venturesome than Christ's act on Calvary?

We have only touched the fringe of a great theme—a theme more than usually difficult, because the treatment is peculiarly liable to be coloured by personal experience.

There are many to whom forgiveness does not seem a very urgent necessity. And these include, not only the determinists, in whose eyes forgiveness is but an irrational hallucination of the emotions; not only the legalists, to whom it seems a needless divergence from the straight path of justice; but also the great body of the 'once-born,' who are not conscious of any serious estrangement from God, and feel able to go forward along the path of service without more ado. For them, perhaps this is the best course—better, at least, than the attempt to foster, at the outset, an artificial sense of sin; yet often the effort to serve will bring in time a realization of impotence and of the need for forgiveness and renewal.[7]

[7] There is an element of truth underlying Dr. Forsyth's sweeping denunciation of the 'once-born' type, as "the chief spiritual peril in the Church" (*The Church and the Sacraments*, p. 14); for in them are found the limitations, as well as the excellencies, of the 'Via Media.'

But others there are, for whom God's forgiveness is a primal and vital necessity. Their spiritual kinship is with the 'twice born'—Paul and Augustine, Luther and Wesley; for them, the central problem of life is: "What I would, I do not; what I would not, that I do;" and one question above all others demands an answer: "Who shall deliver me . . .?"

Science, in reply, can only reiterate the grim laws which we already know only too well: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" "He that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." Wherein there may be much truth, but little life or hope. Under such conditions, the 'religion of healthy-mindedness,' with its breezy call to service, is like the boisterous invitation to a man lying in the throes of a mortal disease, to 'come out for a blow in the fresh air.' Nay; but something must come first; and that is, the removal of the roots of the disease, and the renewal of strength. And in the spiritual life, this is effected by the restored sense of friendship with God, which the message of Divine forgiveness brings in its train.

For if, in the heart of God (and, in lesser measure, of man) there is a power which can break the entail of the past and renew the broken bonds of personal friendship,—then hope and trust will spring up again in response to the initiative of love; and forgiveness will be the birthday of new life—a life of grateful service, which is perfect freedom.

CONVERSION.

By Kenneth Saunders, M.A., Secretary Foreign Committee Y.M.C.A., and Director of Studies at Mildmay Training School.

Conversion has been described as an 'essentially adolescent phenomenon,' and this is probably the best point at which to start a psychological investigation of it. For the central fact in adolescence is the awakening of love, whether for the opposite sex, or for that Unseen Being whose essential nature, as Christ revealed Him, is love. Moreover, "it is with the

irradiations, restraints, and transformations of this fundamental *passion* that morality and religion are essentially concerned." I do not think that we can describe conversion primarily in terms of the will or of the intellect. My own conviction is that much of our current thinking tends to put the cart before the horse, and to think of conversion primarily as a moral change, or as a change of intellectual attitude. It is both, yet the central thesis of this paper is that it is a deep-seated emotional change, and that the essential thing in all great examples of conversion (and the word is too great to be used for any except great experiences) is an emotional upheaval, which is like nothing so much as what we know as "falling in love." It is only love which seems capable of reconstructing life, and of giving that restraint and that irradiation which we find so marked in the great converts.

In the adult, as in the adolescent convert, we find a sense of well-being and joy, as of one who is at last in full harmony with his own nature. The passion of surrender has given him a sense of freedom and of self-realisation which *can* come in other ways, *e.g.*, by a great enthusiasm for his work, or by falling in love with a woman, but which find their perfect and full expression in what we know as conversion in the Christian sense. For in conversion the new visions and high resolutions and aspirations of the lover, and above all, his new and overwhelming emotions, are born in their most lofty form.

In defining conversion as a falling in love with God, it seems necessary to make sure what we mean by our terms, and I would say that I do not mean the birth of some necessarily sudden *emotion*, though the experience may take this form, so much as of a deep and steadfast sentiment, a *passion* for Him whom we regard as the ideal of truth, beauty, holiness, and love, and who alone has the right to that full surrender of our own wills.

This passion finds its distinctive notes, I believe, first in a sense of *an uncontrollable impulse*, so that the subject of it feels that something outside himself and larger than himself has flooded his being, and is dominating his life, and secondly, in *a great joy*, which is the most characteristic emotion through which the passion seeks to express itself.

As Mr. Shand has said, "Joy seems to be the fundamental, the indispensable, emotion in the development of love," and there are many passages in literature beginning in the New Testament and ending in quite recent fiction, which give expression to this great central emotion in the lover and the convert. To take examples from descriptions of adolescents in love, one may refer to Joseph Conrad's *The Outcast of the Islands*, with its fine description of

> "the sudden hurt of a new emotion making its way into a human heart, with the brusque stirring of sleeping sensations awakening suddenly to the rush of new hopes, new fears, new desires, and the flight of one's old self."

Let us note here this last phrase—"the flight of one's old self"—for there is about all the higher ranges of love, something of exaltation out of one's old self into new self-realisation. Or to take another example from John Oxenham, describing the experience of a young girl of nineteen:—

> "Heaven and earth were new created in this glowing hour. A glory had come into her life which passed her knowledge. Her heart, swept bare with sweet delicious fires, was clothed anew in tints of sunrise and of dawn."

One need hardly quote the many passages from the New Testament which make it clear that this exhilarating joy was a feature of the experience of the early Church, and modern missionary literature can supply us with many parallels. For religion helps on our natural tendency to react from pain to joy, and sublimates it. Thus Warneck, in his *Living Forces of the Gospel* notes again and again such things as "a surprising joyousness in prayer" (E.T., p. 219); "A glad, childlike trust" (p. 222); "A pure, genuine joy" (p. 241); "A delightful experience" (p. 248): and this note of joy is struck also in some of the early conversions of the Buddhists which may be studied in Mrs. Rhys Davids' *The Poems of the Elders*. Of this experience our President has written these words:—

> "There can scarcely be found in the world a joy equal to this feeling of expansion, or emotion. It is almost like the acquisition into a new life. It is like what we can imagine the feeling of a fish to be, if he has been left by the tide in a land-locked pool, and begins to feel the flow of the returning waters; or what we can suppose to be the delight of the dragon fly when he shuffles off the skin of his life in the pool and feels his wings expanding for flight."[1]

[1] Percy Gardner, *The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, p. 38.

And the writer does well in turning our thoughts to the reason for this great and overmastering experience, and bidding us find it in that exchange of love for love, that response of the human gratitude to the Divine generosity which is so clearly the motive power of the life of St. Paul after his conversion.[2]

Closely connected then with this joy is a sense of *newness*, and this note is struck, again and again, in St. Paul's epistles; the convert is a new creation, and the world a new world; his new-found passion renews his mind, makes his life over again, and fills his spirit with a new joy.[3]

This note of "newness" is also very familiar in religious biographies, and we need not dwell upon it except to say that the only parallel to it is that sense of a new glory in the common things of life, which is the common experience of the man in love; "the veil was suddenly drawn," says Rabindranath Tagore, "and everything I saw became glorious. The whole world was one glorious music, one wonderful rhythm." When we further analyse this twofold sense of joy and newness, we find that it is really threefold, and that one of the strands is a sense of *freedom*. This is made very vivid in Prof. Gardner's metaphor of the fish and the dragon fly.

For Saul of Tarsus in bondage to the law there dawned a great day of freedom, when the love for Christ in his heart became his 'constraining' or 'controlling' passion. And because he loved to be so held in bondage, he describes his new service as "perfect freedom" in Christ who had set him free.

In the history of the Mission Field, we find many parallels to this; as Warneck says:—

> "The young heathen converts are conscious of a sense of freedom, a feeling of deliverance, whose vividness and strength we cannot imagine. The deliverance is not a mere belief, it is an experience . . . Their consciences are cleansed by communion with God, and they are free from fear." (p. 241).

[2] Other good descriptions are to be found throughout the literature of Conversion, *e.g.*, Frank Bullen, *With Christ at Sea*, p. 137—"We were as near perfect happiness as a man can be in this world." And see pages 69-72 of Saunders' *The Adventures of the Christian Soul.*

[3] cf. 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. iv. 24. Romans vi. 4; vii. 6; xii. 2.

This note of freedom is also struck in many of the poems of the early Buddhists who had escaped from bondage into freedom, usually through the mediation of some noble friend. These Monks and Nuns undoubtedly found a new liberty of heart and mind which they celebrated in snatches of triumphant song, of which the following are chosen almost at random:—

"O woman well set free! how free am I!
O free indeed! O gloriously free
Am I in freedom from three crooked things:
From quern, from mortar, from my crookt-back lord!
Ay, but I'm free from rebirth and from death,
And all that's dragged me back is hurled away!"

"The breath of Liberty sweeps o'er my soul."[4]

And this freedom or sense of expansion and self-enlargement, accompanied by an enlargement of horizon, and a simplifying of the great problems of life, seems an essential part of the joy of conversion. It is not only freedom from the world in which the convert rejoices, but most of all it is freedom from self. For Conversion seems always to have this two-fold strand running through it: a turning to God is accompanied by a turning away from self. As Mr. Wells says in his admirable descriptions of the convert in *God the Invisible King*:—

"The difference between the unconverted and the unbeliever and the servant of the true God is this; it is that the latter has experienced a complete turning away from self. This only difference is all the difference in the world."

Now it is this turning away from self upon which the eyes of the world are naturally riveted. When a notorious sinner changes his whole way of life no one can help seeing it, and so conversion is usually thought of as primarily a moral change; men see the symptoms and are not able, unless they have a similar experience, to probe to the deep-seated cause in the man's emotional nature. And unification of life by which the self which was divided and unhappy becomes unified and radiant is paralleled in that human experience of falling in love, when a man whose life was distracted and without purpose, realises through this great experience a new purpose and unity running through it. The literature of the subject is full of examples of this new-found unification of life which we need

[4] *Psalms of the Sisters*, p. 15, &c.

not quote because they are so familar; but we shall do well to note that this new unity is reached, and can only be reached, in the great majority of cases, through self-surrender. The great note of the confessions of Buddhist converts is that they have reached *self-mastery*, and that this has given them a sense of freedom and of joy.[5] All Christian converts lay the emphasis rather upon *self-surrender*. It is love which in its humility is as ready to accept as to give, and the convert would find it difficult to say whether in surrendering to the Divine Love he had given or taken. The converted soul is "as triumphant in its gratitude as in its generosity," and in becoming a servant it has become doubly free, free on the one side from the tyranny of the old self, free on the other side by a new birth into a great new relationship of love. The convert feels that in surrendering he has surrendered to One whose concern for the development of his life is deeper and truer than any man can have for himself.

It is worth insisting once more in this connection, that all of these notes of conversion point to the fact that it is primarily a religious and not a moral experience; as Warneck says:—

> "The gift is so overwhelmingly new and great, so obviously a gift, that its bearing upon conduct can only gradually enter their consciousness." "It is only gradually that the moral out-working of this experience takes place." "The heathen heart is reached not from the moral but from the religious side. The heathen has gained a living relation to God and a conviction through Christ of his own sinfulness. That is followed by personal obligation to a moral transformation for God's sake. He has now a thorough religious interest in his own moral renewal. *To maintain communion with God, the highest good which the Gospel has given to him, he must become more and more like God.* The impulse to a pure life has its origin in God. The new religious life imperatively demands a new moral behaviour" (p. 267). "The men who burnt their idols have been converted not from their sins, for they do not know what sin means, but to the living God" (p. 245).

And a sense of sin follows, often much later, this sense of God.

Now here we come to another great note which may help to convince us that conversion is a falling in love. For with all the expansiveness, and the joy, and enthusiasm of this great experience there usually goes a sense of unworthiness. As the

[5] Yet probably they were much nearer to worshipping the preacher than they knew.

popular song says with considerable insight: "Fancy you fancying me," and this is a common experience of the lover. How often one has been bored by a description of the charms of some fair one, of whom one's friend insists that he is unworthy. And this sense of unworthiness is in the religious sphere represented by a 'sense of sin:' a sense of sin which developes in most cases after the emotional experience of joy in God, though, of course, there are other cases where it is the very sense of sin that drives men to God.

> "If goodnesse lead him not,
> Yet wearinesse may tosse him to my breast."

I cannot help thinking that the more normal experience is for men to realise that they are sinners because they have fallen in love with the Holy God. In other words, the exuberant joy of the conversion experience is accompanied quite normally at a little later stage by a sense of unworthiness which we call a sense of sin, and in which sorrow at the thought of separation from the Beloved plays a considerable part, though we must not forget that in adolescent converts there are physiological causes which are largely responsible for this new phase of the experience. And it may be well to suggest here that in too many cases this sense of sin is largely exaggerated by the extraordinary artificial separation of the sexes which we encourage in our schools and colleges. I am told that the period of storm and stress, and this sense of separation and aloofness from God and reality, are hardly found at all in co-educational schools. This is a subject that wants the most careful investigation; it is central to that reconstruction of religious education which we all have so much at heart.

A further note in the experience of the lover is a new and quickened insight into the beloved as sympathy grows, and this needs no comment in the religious sphere, for 'to love is virtually to know,' and the Christian convert has the strange sense of possessing the mind of Christ. And this new insight into the mind of the Beloved is accompanied by a clarification of vision in other things;

> "After conversion one goes about the world like one who was perplexed and has found a solution."

Sometimes indeed the experience brings with it a fundamental re-thinking of all our thoughts, and a reversal of all our judgments like that of the converted anarchist who used to say: "Before my conversion my cry was, 'Down with all that is up!' Now I have begun to cry, 'Up with all that is down.'"

And this is all part of the making articulate what had been before inarticulate. The bulk of our people, as we are studying them to-day in the Army, are Christian in sentiment, and very largely Christian in conduct, but they have no articulate sense of a personal relationship with God, they do not link up the vague theism which is theirs with the living Christ, and they certainly do not bring God into their ordinary lives. Such people when they are converted find that God who was vague and marginal has become the living centre of their lives, and this, I think, usually takes place when they realise in their own experience the great and overwhelming fact that Christ is God, and that His kingdom is what matters supremely.

A new motive is now dominant, "For my sake and the Gospel's." These lovers of God have a desire to talk to the Beloved, and a desire to talk to others about Him, which is entirely in keeping with the experience of the human lover. What are the main causes of our British reserve about religion? Is the subject really "too sacred," or is it that we are not enthusiasts?

There are other aspects of love which I can only touch upon, *e.g.*, its reverence for the beloved, its desire for service and sacrifice, its choice of anything rather than separation from the beloved. All these help to convince us that conversion is indeed a falling in love, a surrender of the human heart to the Divine, by which the whole personality is changed, emotions, will, and intellect all being re-made, and self thrust out. As in Silas Marner, the passionate and burning centre of whose life had become the lust of money, nothing could thrust this out except the love for a little child, "the expulsive power of a new affection," so in the convert to the Divine Love, the new emotion coming in enables him to die to things which were before the hot and vital centre of his life. He dies to self, and is alive to God. His range of interest and attention is completely changed. Some soldiers lose all sense of fear because they are conscious of a Divine Presence with them.

So Paul of Tarsus who loved God from his youth up, and was busy serving Him as he conceived Him to be, got a glimpse of the Divine nature as it really was in the martyr Stephen, and henceforward there was no rest for him until that ideal figure, so like Stephen and yet so detestable when judged by his former standards, ceased to keep the place assigned to it in the dim margin of his mind and broke through, becoming focal and dominating. In a word, on the Damascus Road, *he who already loved God fell in love with Jesus*, and became His bond-servant and slave. And then began a life of freedom such as he had never dreamed of, and a life of self-surrender progressively realised until he counted all things as loss compared with this great new mystery.

So if the men of our time are to be converted to God, it seems to me that it can only be through lives like that of Stephen, of which we can say that they are Christ-like lives; the Divine Love must be mediated through the human. So only can God, Who to most of our people is far off and unreal, become real and loveable as they see Him in Christ, and this is the central problem of the Church, at all times and in all lands, so to incarnate the Divine life that men may indeed fall in love with God in Christ, and pass from the inarticulate to the articulate, from a dim theism to a triumphant Christianity, from dullness and deadness to joyous living, from self-absorption to intoxication with the Divine, from weariness to a great sense of the newness and wonder of love, from frivolity and a divided will to a great and steadfast purpose, from narrowness and bitterness to that great expansion of life which comes through love, from bondage to sin and selfishness into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

And this great gift is what I think the Church means by the gift of the Holy Spirit whose nature and whose name is Love, that 'gay spirit' who dwelt in the Church of Christ in the glorious springtide of its youth, and who is seeking once more to 'make all things new.'

INSPIRATION AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

By Professor F. B. Jevons, Litt.D., Principal of Hatfield Hall, Durham.

If the belief in inspiration were found in but one single religion of the world, it would be impossible to study it by the method of comparison—by the comparative method. But as the belief is found to exist in several of the great historical religions, it is possible to study it by the scientific method of comparison; and it is somewhat remarkable that it has not, as far as I know, yet been thus investigated. The reason possibly is that the belief is fundamental and vital to the religions which are based upon it; and therefore from the religious point of view it need not be, and perhaps it is felt ought not to be, critically examined. Whatever the reason may be, it is obvious that the belief in inspiration is a fact; and that, to be examined at all, it must be accepted as a fact, just as much as it was before it was studied by the comparative method. As to the value of the belief in inspiration no question arises in the science of comparative religion just as in the science of biology, no question arises as to the value of life.

The belief in inspiration then is a fact with which the science of comparative religion has to deal; and it has to deal with that fact by comparing the forms in which it appears in various religions, and by seeking to trace "the history of the idea of inspiration" by means of the comparative method.

Let us then look at the various forms of the belief in inspiration; and let us begin with the Mohammedan belief. The Koran, we are told,

> "is believed to have been sent down by God complete . . . and to have been communicated to Mohammed in detail from time to time by the angel Gabriel. . . . It follows therefore that not only the teaching and the substance, but the very form and letters of the text are inspired, that its words are the actual words of God Himself."[1]

The orthodox Mohammedan belief is stated thus by Ibn Khaldun:—

[1] Geden: *Studies in Religion in the East.* London, 1913, p. 791.

"The Qur'an was revealed to our Prophet . . . it is of all divine books the only one communicated to a prophet by word of mouth. . . . Our prophet, like others, received ideas from Allah, but he alone rendered Allah's words. . . . The Qur'an furnishes irresistible evidence of the superiority of our prophet over others." (*ib.*, 788).

The Mohammedan doctrine of inspiration is chronologically later than the Christian, and presumably not unaffected by it. According to the traditional Christian doctrine,

"the New Testament is (1) a sacred book; (2) on the same footing with the Old Testament; (3) inspired by the Holy Spirit; (4) this inspiration is 'verbal,' and extends to facts as well as to doctrines; (5) it carries with it a sort of perfection, completeness, infallibility; (6) the New Testament is appealed to as (*a*) the rule of faith, (*b*) the rule of conduct."[2]

Thus the inspiration of the New Testament was, and of the Koran is, believed to be verbal and infallible.

The traditional Christian doctrine of inspiration is later than the Jewish, and was modelled on it. The inspiration theory of the Old Testament as held by the Jews is that the Old Testament is (1) a sacred book; (2) inspired by God; (3) it has a normative value; (4) it prophetically determined the course of future events, and (5) has an inspiration that might be called verbal (*ib.*)

From the Semitic world let us now turn to the Aryan. We shall find that widely different though the two worlds are in race, language and religion, they hold the same belief, in verbal and infallible inspiration.

The sacred book of the ancient Persians and modern Parsis was the Avesta. "Avesta" is a word which means "knowledge." This knowledge was made known by revelation; the Law was revealed to Zarathushtra by the god or his spirits, in order that it might be made known to mankind.[3]

The sacred books of the Aryan Hindus were the Vedas. "Veda" is a word which means "knowledge." The knowledge contained in the Vedas was made known by revelation. The Vedas were not composed by human beings, they were of purely divine origin, inspired in the strictest sense of the word, and are of infallible authority for belief and the conduct of life (*ib.*, p. 8). The writers of the Vedas are

[2] Sanday: *Inspiration*, London, 1893, p. xvi.

[3] Chantepie de la Saussaye: *Religions-geschichte*. Tübingen, 1905, vol. ii., p. 173.

"honoured as the vehicles but in no sense whatever as the originators or even the shapers of the works attributed to them and handed down from them by oral tradition."[4]

The belief, then, that sacred books are inspired—the idea of inspiration—is peculiar neither to Semitic nor to Aryan peoples, but is common to both. And there is nothing to lead us to suppose that the idea of inspiration was borrowed by the Semites from the Aryans, or by the Aryans from the Semites. The existence of the idea is a fact, a fact in the history of the peoples who have the idea; and the fact must have a history—let us turn, therefore, to "the history of the idea of inspiration."

The Vedas, the Avestas, the Old Testament and the New, are, each of them, a collection of sacred books; and, in each case, the sacred books collected together are of different dates. In the case of the Old Testament and the New Testament we know that the process of collection was also a process of selection. The process was one which required time, and which was only completed in course of time. Not until it was completed, not until certain books were pronounced canonical, and a canon was authoritatively formed, was the inspiration pronounced on authority to be verbal and to be infallible. From the nature of the case it is plain that, not until it had been settled which books were so pre-eminently sacred as to be canonical, could any of them be pronounced to have been verbally inspired. The doctrine of the infallibility and verbal inspiration of the sacred books is later than and follows upon the formation of a canon.

"To the Jews the one primary revelation was the Law; all else was secondary . . . If Israel had only kept the Law, there would have been no need for Prophets or Hagiographa . . . The Law was the first of the three divisions of the Old Testament to attain to what we should call canonical authority."

But what is important here to bear in mind is that the Law had an authority of its own before the idea of canonical authority had been formulated, before ever a canon had been formed. It is this authority of the Law, of the divinely inspired Law, which is of importance for "the history of the idea of inspiration." And it is on the history of divinely inspired Law

[4] Geden, p. 194.

that some light may be thrown by the comparative science of religion. Until writing was invented, there neither was, nor could there be, anywhere any written law. When writing was invented, one of the first uses to which it was put, was to inscribe on tablets of stone the law of the community, for instance, the laws of Gortyna, the Twelve Tablets at Rome, the Ten Commandments of the Hebrews. And in any and every community before Law was, the community was governed, or governed itself, by custom. The custom of a community was authoritative, because it proceeded from the community itself: only on the consent of the community—the customary, and, it may be tacit consent—is any government, or any authority based.

But the custom, and the law—whatever it be—must have some source. It proceeds, in the first instance, from some one person. In the case of advanced communities the person from whom it proceeds is felt both by himself and his hearers to be "inspired." In the case of less advanced communities he is supposed to be "possessed." In both cases, however, his utterances, if they are to be acted on by the community, whether as a matter of custom or of law, must be received by the community—otherwise they do not become part either of the custom or of the law of the community.

That the authority, possessed by the sacred books or scriptures of any people, over the believers in them, is due to the fact that they are received by the community seems clear: unless they were so received, they would not be felt to have authority; and if they were not felt to have authority, they would possess none. This seems to be recognised, or indeed even to be claimed by the adherents of different religions. The defender of each faith, while claiming his scriptures to be inspired, for confirmation of his claim appeals ultimately to the feelings of those who read the scriptures. To Ibn Khaldud it is as clear as day that the Koran, in and by itself, quite apart from the orthodox dogma of its inspiration, "furnishes irresistible evidence of the superiority of our prophet over others." The appeal is to the scriptures—the Mahommedan scriptures—themselves: they are their own evidence. So, too, in reply to the question, why do Christians believe their scriptures to have come at the prompting of the Most High? Canon Sanday answers, because they "make those

affirmations about Him," the Most High, "which the world" —Canon Sanday means of course the Christian world—"has pronounced to be the best and truest, and which it has taken as the centre of its beliefs to this day." (l.c., p. 394). Christians, then, believe the pronouncements of their scriptures to be inspired because they feel them to be true; and the test of inspiration is not any authority ascribed to the Bible, but the recognition of the reader that he feels the affirmation and pronouncements in it to be true. S. T. Coleridge said :—

> "It is my profound conviction that St. John and St. Paul were divinely inspired; but I totally disbelieve the dictation of any one word, sentence or argument throughout their writings."[5]

But Coleridge went on to say:—

> "Surely the heart and soul of every Christian give him sufficient assurance that, in all things that concern him as a *man*, the words that he reads are spirit and truth, and could only proceed from Him who made both heart and soul."

From this point of view we may say of inspiration generally what Coleridge said of Christianity in particular, that it proves itself

> "as the sun is seen—by its own light. Its evidence is involved in its existence."[6]

If this argument be criticised as an argument which may be —and indeed, as we have seen, has been—used equally well by believers in other scriptures than the Christian Bible, the reply is that it is not for the science of comparative religion to undertake to pronounce on the validity or value of any belief, but to endeavour to trace "the history of the idea of inspiration." That must first be done; for as Canon Sanday says (*l.c.*, p. 427) any theory of inspiration must be "in touch with, or rather grow spontaneously out of, the facts of history."

What then are the facts of history out of which every theory of inspiration has grown and any theory must grow? In every religion, possessing sacred books, that we are now concerned with, there is a book of law. In some, *e.g.*, the Vedas, there are also hymns. In others, *e.g.*, the Old Testament, there are books of mysteries revealed by prophets, and also books of devotion, the Psalms. The earliest of these books is the book of law; law it is which is common to all of these religions,

[5] *Table Talk*, 31st March, 1832. [6] *Table Talk*, 6th January, 1823.

and some of them contain nothing more, and never advance beyond law. Both by the Jews and by other peoples the book of their law

> "was thought to speak to the will, and to require submissive acceptance and obedient following in deed and in belief."[7]

And the theory was that the law had its source in inspiration. As a matter of history, the inspiration was what was known as "possession" in the earlier stages of evolution, when custom had not yet become crystallised into law; what it was at first the custom of a community to do came eventually to be regarded as law, imposed by authority and demanding "submissive acceptance." But what in truth constitutes the authority alike of custom and of law—so long as either is felt to have authority—is the fact that the community tends on the whole to follow the trodden path. But crises—revolutions—do occur in which the community shows that custom and law are but ways in which it has hitherto acted, and ways which it can change. Except, however, in revolutionary times, the community does not know itself as the source of the authority alike of custom and of law; and the authority is ascribed to some source external to the community, which not only demands but commands "submissive and obedient following."

Where this conception of an authority external to the community has established itself, it is in the name of this authority —"thus saith the Lord"—that prophets speak, and it is by this authority that they are thought to be inspired. But, once more, it is by the community that they are thought to be inspired—if they are thought to be prophets and not to be false prophets. And, as it was to the will of each member of the community that the law was held to speak, so it was primarily to the intellect that prophecy appealed, as a key by which the secrets of the universe can be unlocked" (*l.c.* p. 284).

Possibly it was because prophecy appealed to the intellect that the work of Zarathushtra, as of the Hebrew prophets, found more acceptance with the higher minds than with the ordinary members of the religious community. But the persistence of the influence of prophecy is due to the unquenchable longing of

[7] F. C. Porter, *Transactions of the Third International Congress of the History of Religions.*, Oxford, 1908, vol. ii., p. 283.

the human mind for a "key by which the secrets of the universe can be unlocked." And the theory of inspiration was enlarged when prophets came to be "regarded especially as the revealers of mysteries of the unseen world, and of the future" (*l.c.*, p. 283): originally conceived as giving or enjoining an authoritative direction to the will of the community, inspiration came to be regarded as also enlightening the intelligence and affording a comprehension of the burden and the mystery of this otherwise unintelligible world.

> "There is, however, no doubt that to many Jews the sacred book was chiefly one of devotion, appealing rather to the religious feelings than to the will or to the intellect" (*l.c.*);

and it was in the Old Testament pre-eminently the Psalms that were the "book of devotion," the "book of prayer, giving language to religious feeling and food to religious life" (*ib.*). And it is not only in the Old Testament that Psalms are found: in Babylon there were the Penitential Psalms. There "the penitent exclaims:—

> Lord, my sins are many, great are my misdeeds.

The spirit, in which he approaches his God, is expressed in the words:—

> I, thy servant, full of sighs, call upon thee.
> Like the doves do I moan, I am o'ercome with sighing:
> With lamentations and groanings my spirit is downcast.

His prayer is that his trespasses may be forgiven:—

> Rend my sins like a garment!
> My God, my sins are unto seven times seven.
> Forgive my iniquities.

And his hope is in God:—

> Oh, Lord, thy servant, cast him not away,
> The sins which I have committed, transform by thy grace.

The attitude of mind [in these Babylonian Psalms] is the same as that revealed in the [Hebrew] Psalm:—

> My sin is ever before me.
> Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.
> Cast me not away from thy presence."[8]

It was, however, not merely the Psalms but the whole of the Old Testament—so penetrated and inspired is it by the emotional element—that was capable of being used by the Jews as a book of devotion, "appealing rather to the religious feelings

[8] Jevons, *The Idea of God*. Cambridge, 1910, pp. 145-6.

than to the will or to the intellect." And so, too, the New Testament, like the Old, though much used by Christians as a law and a revelation, "has always been a book of devotion, through which the heart has been stirred and lifted up in the presence of God."[9] This, then, is, as shewn by the facts of history, the third manifestation of the belief in inspiration; those words are believed to be inspired which are felt to be inspired. The man of God is not merely or only believed to be inspired, because he claims to exercise authority over the will of those whom he addresses, or because he reveals mysteries to the intelligence, he is felt to be inspired because he gives "language to religious feeling and food to religious life." This Thomas Carlyle saw, when he said (in *Hero Worship*, p. 92):—

> "The oldest Hebrew prophet, under a vesture the most diverse from ours, does yet, because he speaks from the heart of man, speak to all men's hearts."

The belief in inspiration then—whatever the value we assign to the belief—is a fact. But, like all other facts, it has its history; and that history is part of the process of evolution—the belief presents itself in several forms, and those forms have a historical order—first the Law, next the Prophets, then the Psalms.

But the belief in inspiration is not only a historical fact. It is also a psychological fact, a fact in social psychology; and, viewed thus, inspired words may be regarded as addressed primarily either to the will, or to the intelligence, or to the feeling of the community—primarily but not exclusively, for the simple reason that will, intelligence, and feeling co-exist and do not exist separately from one another. The words which fall from the lips of a speaker may, or may not, be received by the hearers as inspired. If not so received, it is because they fail to touch the heart of the hearer. If, however, they are so received, it is because they proceed from the heart of the speaker to the heart of the listener—and this it is which seems to be the characteristic common to all the three forms in which the belief in inspiration presents itself. The words have authority and become the law, because the hearers harken with all their hearts, because it is their will to obey. Or, the words are accepted as

[9] Porter, p. 286.

unveiling the mysteries of the unseen and the future, because the revelation commends itself to the hearts and minds of those to whom it is expounded. Or, again, the words are felt to be true, because by them the heart is stirred, and in them religious feeling finds its true expression.

This seems to be the furthest point to which the science of comparative religion is capable of taking us, viz., that he is felt to be inspired who, because he speaks from the heart of man speaks to all men's hearts.

If from the fact we were to turn to the value of the belief in inspiration, we should be leaving science and turning to philosophy; and that would be to travel beyond the scope of this paper. I will only recall your attention to the words of S. T. Coleridge, in which he says that it is the heart and soul of the Christian which assure him that the words he reads "are spirit and truth and could only proceed from Him who made both heart and soul." The words are themselves their own proof—and the only proof—that they are inspired, just as it is by his own light that the sun is seen. The words are felt in the heart and soul to be such that they "could only proceed from Him who made both heart and soul." First, the words are there—felt to be spirit and truth. Then comes the irresistible conviction as to the source whence they proceed. When that conviction is attained, then not only the speaker of the words but the hearer also is inspired, in his degree and according to the measure of his capacity.

To sum up and conclude. Sacred books have authority for the same reason and the same extent as governments have authority, that is because and in so far as the community chooses to obey them. The reason why the community obeys them is that it feels them to be true—and therefore believes them to proceed from, or to be inspired by, the source of all truth. This belief is a fact—and that fact the science of comparative religion has to accept. On the validity of the belief—whether in the Vedas, the Avestas, the Koran, the Old Testament, or the New Testament—neither psychology nor the science of comparative religion has anything to say; that question "belongs to another enquiry."

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF INSPIRATION.[1]

By the Rev. C. W. Emmet, B.D., Author of
The Eschatological Question, &c.

We are most of us aware of the relation of a great conductor to his orchestra. The secret of his influence lies in what we sometimes vaguely call 'personal magnetism;' he inspires the players—in so far as they open themselves to his influence—with his own conception of the music; there is a blending of spirit with spirit. In a sense they feel that it is no longer they themselves who are playing, but his finer spirit which has entered into them. And yet in the end there is no superseding of their own personality, but rather its enhancement. The contact calls out latent powers of understanding and expression which would otherwise have remained unrealised. Exactly the same thing happens in other fields with respect to the teacher of genius and his pupils, and the point of view of this paper will be that inspiration is simply the result of a similar influence of the Divine Spirit upon the human spirit. God is always thus teaching man; all discovery, whatever the subject matter, comes from this contact between His Spirit and man's. Differences in the degree of inspiration depend upon how far we succeed in opening ourselves to this personal relationship.

Can we then discover any criterion as to the degree of inspiration, in other words, the closeness of communion with the Divine Spirit in any given case, and the amount of truth in the result as expressed in word or art? What we are concerned to maintain is that this is in no way dependent on any one particular mode of discovery or revelation. In quite primitive times inspiration was connected with what is psychically abnormal, the dream or trance, ecstasy or frenzy, where the human reason is at its lowest. Such a position has long been abandoned. Studies of psychical phenomena, whether in trance or in automatic speech and writing, prove conclusively that, even if such methods may sometimes be a channel of truth, they are in no possible sense a guarantee of truth, or necessarily

[1] This paper will appear in a fuller form in a volume of Essays to be published next year by Messrs. Macmillan, under the editorship of Canon Streeter. Necessary limitations of space have compelled the abridgement of the arguments at several important points.

a means of revealing the highest types of truth. But the old Adam dies hard; if there is no open vision, it is assumed that the word of the Lord is rare, and hardly to be heard. Efforts are therefore made to find specific revelation and guaranteed truth in other directions. The extent of the revelation is made to depend on the degree to which it is psychologically unintelligible. Is the message unexpected? Has it come by a sudden intuition? Is it apparently inexplicable as the result of previous study and reflexion? If so, it is suggested, we have at last evidence of a direct self-revelation of God.

A typical example of such an attempt may be found in a comparatively recent book, Dr. Hamilton's *The People of God*. He argues that the monotheism of the Hebrew prophets (*i.e.*, their belief that Jehovah is the sole God of the world, opposed to the older idea that He was but the God of the Hebrews) was due to a special self-revelation of God. It cannot, he urges, be explained as the result of environment, or reflexion on the facts of life and history, or intellectual dialectic. Its origin is quite different to that of the Greek philosophical monotheism, and can only be accounted for by an inner spiritual experience in which God manifested Himself directly and immediately *by a mode confined to one race*. Dr. Hamilton therefore draws a sharp distinction between discovery and Revelation, or between revelation and Revelation:—

> 'revelation' means the knowledge about God which man derives from reflexion on the facts of existence, and would perhaps be better called 'human discovery.' 'Revelation' stands for a knowledge of God given directly to man by God Himself, and not mediated through reflexion on the nature of existence. . . . In the one case man arrives at a knowledge of God's existence and character by a slow and painful process of endeavouring to solve the riddle of existence; in the other case this knowledge comes directly without being mediated through such a process of reflexion."[2]

Not for a moment would we quarrel with the position that the prophetic insistence on Jehovah as the one God is an outstanding example of inspiration, or revelation, at its highest, though Dr. Hamilton's view of the uniqueness of the Hebrew monotheism is open to some question. What we have to ask is how far there is a special channel and type of Revelation in an exclusive sense,

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 165.

confined to one race and religion. How far is it true that certain truths are directly revealed by God, while others are discovered by man through the exercise of his own reason?

In the first place let us consider the suggested distinction between Revelation and revelation. Dr. Hamilton himself seems to have some difficulty in drawing the line so sharply as he suggests. For between the two sentences just quoted comes another which, carefully considered, endangers his whole position.

> "The dividing line between 'Revelation' and 'revelation' is not that the former is God's effort to seek after man and the latter man's effort to seek after God; for we do not know that the Eternal Spirit is not seeking to disclose Himself to man through his own powers of observation and reflection."

Here precisely is the crux. As we have already suggested, is not all discovery revelation? Man is seeking, God is revealing, always and by many channels. In the words of Mr. C. C. J. Webb,

> "It is He that is active throughout; and what activity we ascribe to ourselves in this matter we recognize as due to the operation or grace of His Spirit, *i.e.* of God Himself."

No doubt there are differences of method, diversities of operation, but the one and self-same Spirit is at work in all. There is the desire to discover truth, beauty, and moral goodness, and to express them in word, art, or conduct; there is the seeking for the Divine fellowship in prayer and meditation; there are immediate intuitions bringing with them a direct sense of His presence. But can we ultimately separate sharply between them, labelling one discovery, and another revelation? Are not most of them found in the same persons, in varying proportions?

We may also raise the question whether this psychological unintelligibility, which seems to characterise some instances of revelation, is either so complete, or in itself so significant, as is often supposed. When we examine their experiences, the direct and peculiar revelation which is claimed for the prophets and the Biblical writers turns out not be independent of the ordinary human means of discovery. Modern psychological analysis, whether of conversion or of the processes of discovery and artistic production, has thrown much light on the whole

subject. What seems the spontaneous, unexpected, and inexplicable flash is in fact the outcome, emerging into consciousness, of a long period of subconscious reflexion on material which the conscious mind has supplied. A good illustration is afforded by the dreams of Professor Hilprecht.[3] He went to bed on one occasion after a hard spell of work on the translation of an Assyrian stone, and awoke in the morning with a new translation in his mind which turned out to be correct. He had a dim consciousness of having continued his work in a dream. Much more remarkable is his account of a dream in which a priest of Nippur leads him to the treasure chamber of a temple, and explains to him the history of two fragments of agate, which he had been studying from a sketch, and tells him how they may be fitted together, and the inscription deciphered. He had had no idea that the two fragments were in fact connected, since they were described as being of different colours, but the 'revelation' was found to be absolutely accurate in all verifiable particulars, and probable in the parts where proof was no longer possible. The point to note is "that not one of these items of information was beyond the reach of the processes of associative reasoning which Professor Hilprecht daily employs." The final solution of the problem, coming in this dramatic and unexpected way, was the crystalizing, or precipitate, of weeks of apparently fruitless study. In particular he uses in his dream a piece of information given to him some years previously by a friend, and entirely forgotten by his waking mind.

There are, of course, numerous similar illustrations of such sub-conscious mentation, following hard and sometimes apparently fruitless thinking, in the realms of literature and art.[4]

Here is Donald Hankey's description of his writing of *The Lord of All Good Life:—*

> "I would have you realise that it was written spontaneously, in a burst, in six weeks. . . . I had tried and tried, but without success. Then suddenly everything cleared up. To myself the writing of it was an illumination."[5]

[3] See Myers. *Human Personality*, pp. 365 ff. (one volume edition.

[4] See, *e.g.*, Myers, *Human Personality*, p. 71 (one volume edition).

[5] *The Student in Arms* (2nd series), p. 31.

Most quite ordinary workers will in fact be able to illustrate from their own knowledge this experience of the sudden solution of a difficulty long pondered over in vain, of the apparently spontaneous arrangement of a complicated train of thought, or the flashing into the mind of the artistic or literary inspiration.

There is indeed no reason to doubt that the prophets and apostles thought and reflected like ordinary men. We may instance Professor G. A. Smith's[6] suggestive treatment of the phrase "In the year that king Uzziah died," with which Isaiah opens the narrative of his call, a psychological and religious experience which might seem at first sight to be entirely spontaneous. Professor Smith points out that the words give the key to what happened. The tragic end of the king who had been his hero came as a shock to the young prophet; it marked his passage from hero-worship and imperialism to religion and faith. The subsequent vision and revelation become psychologically intelligible, the result of a personal crisis, due to historical events and reflexion on them; but they do not become any less true or epoch making. No doubt we cannot always trace the psychological antecedents which condition the experiences of the Biblical writers. This is only what we should expect, since they are concerned not with the process by which they arrived at their conclusions, but with the conclusions themselves. They were not interested in psychology; in many cases they were probably entirely unconscious themselves of any preliminary process, and the outcome seemed genuinely spontaneous, directly communicated from without. Such a belief is by no means unique; examples from other fields come readily to mind.

We may instance Coleridge's writing of *Kubla Khan*. He fell asleep while reading *Purchas' Pilgrimage*, and awoke with two or three hundred lines ready composed. When he had written down fifty-four lines he was interrupted by a caller; after he had gone, the rest had completely vanished from his mind. Or again, we recall R. L. Stevenson's account of how he wrote his stories in his dreams, deliberately leaving them plot and all, to his 'Little People.'[7] No doubt it is true that

[6] *The Book of Isaiah* "(The Expositor's Bible)," pp. 58ff.
[7] *Across the Plains*, "A Chapter on Dreams."

in all such cases there is always the poetic faculty, or whatever it may be, in the background, and that this has been developed by previous use and training, but the writer is not conscious of this; the intuition seems a direct gift from without for which he has no responsibility.

It is not surprising that in such cases of apparently spontaneous emergence the feeling of 'otherness' and of external inspiration is especially strong. Stevenson, not altogether playfully, attributes his stories to his 'Brownies,' both when he is asleep, and even to some extent during his waking hours. Blake attributes his poems to spiritual helpers. As he walked along the sea shore he was haunted by the forms of Moses and the prophets, of Homer and Milton, who seemed to communicate to him directly what he was to write. "I may praise it," he says, "since I dare not pretend to be other than secretary; the authors are in eternity." "I have written this poem from immediate dictation, twelve, or sometimes twenty or thirty lines at a time without premediation, and even against my will."

The more usual interpretation of the authority and otherness of such messages is to ascribe them directly to God, or the Holy Spirit, Himself. Böhme,[8] speaking of his visions, says: "Whatever I could bring into outwardness, that I wrote down. The work is none of mine; I am but the Lord's instrument, wherewith He doeth what He will." The account which the prophetic writers of the Bible give of themselves is often in line with this conception. No doubt it is difficult to be quite sure how far "The Lord said unto me," or the language of visions, whether in the prophets or the Apocalyptic writers, represents in all cases a real psychological experience, or whether it is sometimes merely an accepted literary and religious mode of expression. But in either case it unquestionably stands for a conviction of the truth of the message and a belief that in some sense this is not the prophet's own, but comes from a higher source outside himself. This conviction is parallel to the sense of otherness which we found in the moral sphere. It is a postulate of any deep religious experience that it is a power, not ourselves, which raises and saves, and

[8] Quoted in Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 277.

also which reveals and teaches. But to return to our illustration from teacher and pupil, the new influence from without works by entering into the personality so as to co-operate with it; it does not over-ride or supersede it by way of possession. And in analysing the resultant what we find is not two personalities or elements existing and working side by side, unblended like oil and water, but a new combination different from what either would have been alone. It is not entirely human, or entirely divine, but a composite of the two.

If this be so, it follows that it is impossible to find in anything which comes through the medium of a human mind an absolute 'revelation.' There is always some dross with the gold, something individual and peculiar, temporary and inadequate.

The prophet, whether in religion, art, or science, is justified in his claim "Thus saith the Lord," but it cannot be held to carry with it the elimination of the human element or to place the content of his message beyond criticism. Nor again does it imply an access to a type of inspiration denied to the ordinary man.

It is indeed easy to see that the mere fact of suddenness or psychological unintelligibility is not in itself a criterion of the revelation of the highest truth, or even of truth at all. We may instance the powers of water-finders or of boy calculators, where the immediacy and inexplicability are at their highest. Works of art which, as it were, come of themselves are not always works of genius. Nietzsche gives the strongest expression to the sense of 'given-ness,' immediacy, and certainty, which he had with regard to his own speculations; do we therefore accept them as an 'inspired revelation?'

It is indeed generally recognised that such personal conviction of communion with the Divine may be perfectly genuine without guaranteeing the full truth of the message which seems to him who experiences it to be bound up with it. Let us listen to the testimony of Mr. Wells:

> "Then suddenly, in a little while, in his own time, God comes. This cardinal experience is an undoubting immediate sense of God. It is as if one were touched at every point by a being akin to oneself, sympathetic beyond measure. . . . It is like standing side by side with and

> touching someone we love very dearly and trust completely. 'Closer is he than breathing, nearer than hands and feet." The moment may come while we are alone in the darkness, under the stars, or while walking by ourselves, or in a crowd, or while we sit and muse. It may come in the sinking ship or in the tumult of battle. But after it has come our lives are changed. God is with us, and there is no more doubt of God."

These words undoubtedly represent a first-hand religious experience, but they do not compel us to accept the theology of *God the Invisible King* as the outcome of a special revelation. Are we then justified in arguing in the case of the Bible that the unquestioned genuineness of the religious experience of its writers is in itself the proof of the truth of their teaching? In the Psalms we find the sense of personal fellowship with God at its highest, but this does not, as has sometimes been suggested, carry with it any guarantee that the attitude towards enemies found in some of them corresponds to the Divine Mind.

The fact is, that neither in religion nor in philosophy or art or science, can we say in the last resort why a particular discovery or revelation comes to one man or one age rather than to another. Men living at the same time have the same raw material to work upon; some of them may be engaged on the same line of thought or artistic effort with apparently equal sincerity and devotion; the same fellowship with the same Spirit is open to all. But the flash of discovery, or the special gift of expression, comes to one and not to another. Sometimes we can in a measure explain the reason; sometimes we are baffled. It is always the gift of God, the result of coming to know His mind in some sense, in so far as it is true and valid, but the extent to which it is His gift and corresponds to His mind depends on the truth of the discovery not on the method, or the degree of its unexpectedness. A piece of music such as the last movement of the *Ninth Symphony*, the result of long years of previous work and study, itself hammered out after many experiments and rejected themes, may be as much inspired as Schubert's Songs, flashing into the mind unexpectedly and almost ready formed. *Paradise Lost*, written slowly and under the conscious direction of reason and thought, is not less a revelation than Blake's lyrics. St. Luke's Gospel, the result

of the comparison and blending of earlier documents and material, or the considered argument of the Romans, is as inspired as the vision of the Apocalypse. We need not in any way underrate the value of intuitive flashes of genius; something of this element is probably in some form necessary to all the greatest achievements of art or religion. But it is not the special criterion of reality of communion with God. We cannot confine revelation to any one process, or suppose that its supreme examples are to be found in what is psychologically unintelligible; still less that the unintelligibility or unexpectedness is the criterion of the revelation.

We must then frankly abandon the attempt to find the special working of God in the gaps, in what we cannot explain by known laws, whether in nature or psychology, in supposed breaks in the process of evolution, in miracles in the old sense, in discoveries the genesis of which is obscure. The fact that we may be able to trace the working of cause and effect does not make a thing less the work of God, nor is it more so because at present we may fail to unravel the sequence.

We see then that the only test of inspiration is the truth of the message; this truth must be judged on its own merits, and by the methods of human reason at its best. We cannot escape the responsibility of judging by falling back upon a reliance on the particular psychological process by which the message seems to have been reached. There is indeed a condition which we may believe is always fulfilled, the condition of a real contact between the Divine Spirit and the human. But this is not a condition which can be tested from outside. There are however many cases where, once the message has approved itself to the reason and conscience by its inherent appeal, we can go back and see that the condition has in fact been fulfilled in a pre-eminent degree. It is so with many at least of the writers of the Bible; it is so without reserve with Christ Himself. And here we may note the marked absence of anything psychically abnormal in the channels by which this inspiration came. It was due to His constant and unbroken communion with His Father.

But while we recognize to the full the reality and value of the great examples of inspiration, we are concerned to

maintain that it is not a rare thing, peculiar to a small class; in its measure it is open to the ordinary man. Whatever be the material with which we have to deal, only through contact with the Spirit of God can we in the last resort find right judgment, guidance, and illumination. In proportion as we open our hearts to the Presence which is always there we too shall know what it is to be taught of God. Inspiration is just this, nothing more—and nothing less.

SAINTLINESS.

By Prebendary Alfred Caldecott, D.D., D.Litt., sometime Professor of Philosophy, King's College, London.

In what is to be said here two limitations will be obvious. There is no specific treatment of Saintliness as Christian, it is Religion in general which is in view; and the ideal is exhibited by contrast with the counter-ideal stated in an extreme form. Both of these defects are due to the need for simplicity and for brevity.

All will agree that Saintliness signifies *eminence in Religion;* and for psychological study, eminence of Religious *character.*

The two opposing ways of looking for eminence are (1) Religion as a separate, outstanding feature of character, distinct as Snowdon or the Matterhorn, and (2) Religion as pervading and colouring the whole widespread landscape of the soul. In this contrast we proceed in psychology parallel with the dual choice offered elsewhere; as, for example, in theology, with one conception of God as distinct from the world, overarching it, brooding over it from above; and another conception of Him as having created within the compass of His own being a cosmos in which He dwells and rules; in

political philosophy, where sovereignty is placed in the hands of a Monarch, or wide-spread over the whole body of the people. Of these, the former conception is the easier, and therefore the more prevalent. Kings and chiefs precede democracies, and both precede constitutional States; gods, as a separate order, precede pantheism, and both precede theism. It is the same with the assignment of highest respect in Religion: the first impulse is to admire it as a detached and exclusive occupation of the soul; Elijah and John the Baptist win the respectful regard of the people at large; a separated priesthood is easily understood. In the mirror held up by Shakespeare we find the popular judgment reflected: Isabella, in *Measure for Measure*, is "ensky'd and sainted" because she is about to retire from the world. And the contagion is so strong that it affects even those who have specially qualified themselves for being independent of it. For example, Wordsworth's "Tax not the royal saint," in application to one of the weakest of English kings in everything except devotional piety; Baron von Hügel's allotment of the term 'Religious to Plotinus *par excellence*;'[1] and Miss Spurgeon's limitation of application of the term 'Religious Mystics.'[2] And at this particular time, when we stand with the sea of mystic literature flowing in at high tide, there is special ease in yielding to the attraction of its commendation of Religion as a detached and separate quality of the life of the soul.

I need not here expound the *Exclusive* ideal. It is presented to us in every advanced Religion, and finds expression in every literature. With its *Intra te quaere Deum* it invites us to quit the matrix of external nature into which we were born, to bid the singer of Psalm 104 hang up his harp and sing no more. And within the soul to speed across the outer zone of the natural desires and activities and ideas in haste to seek God in an innermost shrine.

The unselfishness, the thoroughness, and the loftiness of the aim cannot but affect us with solemn feelings of respect for those who, by strenuous energy and in much endurance of pain, have attained their eminence in this pursuit. Nevertheless, some of us at least are convinced that the exclusive ideal is

[1] *The Mystical Element*, p. 23. [2] *Mysticism in English Literature.*

infected by an inherent and fundamental error; no other than the thought and wish to reverse God's own action, to uncreate His creation. This is so in the contempt for the world, and in the apathy and indifference to it which is worse than contempt. And it is so in the reduction to 'selflessness' of the soul which God has called into being. Plainly so as to the varied capacities of mind and heart on the ordinary levels of our life; and with the further tendency of desiring eventually to give back to God even the central germ of our spiritual individuality also. Is not this humility an inverted arrogance? Is it not to be wiser than the Divine Wisdom itself?

It is under the conviction that man's true way to Saintliness cannot lie across what T. H. Green[8] has called 'an artificial vacancy' that some of us turn to seek another ideal.

The ideal of Saintliness as *Comprehensive* I venture to formulate as follows:—

The dominance of religion in a constitutionally ordered soul as an active member of the city of God, beginning on earth but with constant thought of this life as a preparation for the life beyond.

The qualities comprising the essence of such a character are (1) consciousness of God; (2) comprehensiveness of all the capacities of human nature; (3) in a constitution or order; (4) life in the fellowship of souls; and (5) appreciation of the physical world. A few words on each of these.

(1) There must be constant consciousness of God. By this I do not mean only the idea of God as it may stand before the intellect of an Agnostic as clearly as before that of a religious man, but also the firm belief in His reality, shedding illumination upon our thoughts, and therewith the love of Him as the master-passion of our affections: the force and the light of our life drawn from this central consciousness. And this not by touches and flashes but as the settled and pervading habit of the soul.

On this I need not expatiate, as it is the common ground to both the ideals we are contrasting. It marks the difference between saintliness and the eminence of heroism and genius. On the distinctiveness, the uniqueness, the intuitiveness, of

[8] *The Witness of God.*

man's consciousness of God I am whole-heartedly with the Mystics.

(2) Comprehensiveness. Every faculty of our nature must be in activity. There must be vigour of intellect: not necessarily high reasoning power, or great stores of acquired knowledge; it may preferably be vigour of intuition. But there must be wisdom: feebleness of intelligence is a manifest defect. There must be emotional sensibility: a varied capacity for enjoyment, wide and deep sympathies, a boundless flow of outgoing affections. There must be activity: exercise, energy, the doing of good and the endurance of pain and trouble; adventure, originality. "No evidences of the supermundane God have any power," wrote Hort,[4] "if we fail to discern the radiations of transmitted and derivative deity as the luminous and vital tissue of finite things"—including the soul of man. "Nor could I be quite content," writes Mr. Balfour,[5] with somewhat unnecessary caution, "with any form of Theism which did not sustain in every essential part the full circle of human interests." Rupert Brooke once said "I suddenly felt the extraordinary value of everybody I meet, and almost everything I see." This was a 'conversion,' but it was not by contraction but by expansion of the soul.

(3) There must be co-ordination and subordination of all the capacities of every level: the soul must have a constitution. Not suppression or dispersal, but collection and concentration of all the capacities in constant effectiveness, the central consciousness of God arranging all of them around itself in a beautiful symmetry. For this there must be proportionateness: every capacity operating according to its relative value and its power of contributing to the whole: 'measure' and 'relevance' are key-words for this ideal. What Butler taught us in Morals —herein carrying on the great Hellenic tradition—is true for religion also—"the inward frame of a man is a system or constitution:" as in Morals the consciousness of the good has the prerogative of sovereign right, so in the soul as a whole the consciousness of the perfection and the majesty of God. The constitution is administered by its sovereign interest with a just

[4] *The Way, the Truth, and the Life,*
[5] *Theism and Humanism*, p. 249.

value and honour assigned to each participant in it, from the loftiest to the most humble. Transformed from conflict and turbulence the soul settles into a system, stable, constant, habitual: its life proceeds in consolidated orderliness under the dominance of its consciousness of God. In this happy condition it passes not only to peace, but to enthusiasm, to the joy which must be felt when the true spirit of religion is awake and its influences are spreading through the whole essence of the soul.

(4) The religious soul lives in the reciprocity of social relationships. It grows not by remaining isolated at its own centre, but by cultivating an expanding circle of relations with its fellows. Psychological observation brings evidence that as the mind grows the delight in doing good tends to prevail over even the joy of peace and harmony within: the bestowal of good and happiness upon our fellows, and our reception of these from them, become more and more indispensable as experience matures. We become glad to think that

> "Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
> Not light them for themselves."

In the seeking after God the saints, far from regarding voyaging souls as 'ships that pass in the night,' hail one another with joyous greeting, "Bone of our bone, and kindred souls!" The happy dominance in religious thought to-day of the thought of the kingdom of God, the city of God, obviates need for dwelling upon this theme.

(5) External Nature. The saintly soul finds enjoyment in the physical and animal world for the Divine wisdom and glory manifested in it. This world is of lower value than the spiritual, yet we discern in it 'diffracted and remoter utterances of God,'[6] to quote the Cambridge master again. We sing

> "The Almighty power of God
> That made the mountains rise,
> That spread abroad the flowing seas,
> And built the lofty skies."

And we value it also as ministering to those modes of human nature which are dependent upon our being located in a physical universe, and with a teeming animal creation all about us. And further, we recognize nature as not only to be contemplated and admired and used as it stands, but to be

[6] Hort, ibid, p. 144.

re-shaped and transformed for the higher purposes of the moral and spiritual life of man. Abounding though it does in what present themselves to us as irrationalities and enigmas, perturbations and sources of pain, half concealing as well as half revealing God, as Dr. Glazebrook says,[7] the religious mind associates itself with the scientific mind in a conviction of radical rationality and meaning, awaiting our discovery and certain to reward our unshakeable respect.

Of the ideal of Saintliness as comprehensive, is it not true to say that it is harder of attainment than the ideal as exclusive? Do we not after merely hearing of it feel like Rasselas on hearing Imlac's statement of the nature of poetry, "Enough! thou hast convinced me that no human being can ever be a poet." We seem to be placed with the Stoics who after enthusiastic description of wisdom invariably fell to doubting whether a wise man had ever appeared, or could appear. "Enough!" we may well exclaim, "it is plain that on these terms there never has been a saint, nor will be." But to falter in allegiance on this account will be possible only if we for a moment forget that the ideal for a finite being must ever surpass the actual. And in the actual we shall often be content to assign saintliness to eminence in some one of the major capacities of the soul, displayed prominently and regarded representatively as showing possibilities in other ways. We judge by this one quality, and make reference to others after the manner of the meaning of the expression 'the patriot's all-atoning name;' and as we are led to think of the heroism of the trenches and the ships when displayed by characters in no way beyond the ordinary except for this one act or habit of nobility of soul. The one gift must atone by its eminence for what we regard not as the absence but as the undeveloped condition of the others.

It is a consequence of the excellence of the comprehensive ideal that it should be exposed to serious perils. The most obvious are two: first, that of our being drawn down into some particular phase of our nature, being 'canalized' to use Bergson's expression, and kept in it. Every channel of our mental life has its own attractiveness: there are as many

[7] *Faith of a Modern Churchmann*, p. 82.

invitations as there are interests. And second, the danger of being lost in the manifoldness through inability to achieve contentration: "torn piecemeal, I lost myself in the multiplicity of things," lamented Augustine. In the effort to impose order we shall have to face refractory forces and apparently irreconcileable incompatibilities. Even strong souls have been dismayed at the prospect: Augustine and Pascal fall back and retire upon the exclusive ideal, but Butler, Schleiermacher, Maurice, stand firm in their conviction that it is the Divine purpose that we should hold on in faith and hope to the sanctification of the whole range of our nature.

These are perils within the soul; too great and too conspicuous to need description here. There is a third upon which I desire to dwell at more length because it touches a component of the ideal which especially concerns every member of this Conference who has a ministry or vocation to discharge; and which of us would be willing to say that this is not himself? I mean, effectiveness for the service of mankind. There is inherent in the comprehensive character a difficulty in obtaining influence among his fellows. For, as we have already seen, the majority of mankind are not able to discern the presence of Religion in the all-embracing type of character so readily as in the separated, rarefied, and exclusive type. The comprehensive type receives some acknowledgment of excellence, but does it lead to the *eminence* which we have agreed to be signified by Saintliness? Are not the tones of moderatism pale and grey in comparison with the colour and glow required if admiration is to be kindled and attractive influence to be exercised? Ὁ φρόνιμος: yes, he may be worthy of respect, and he may win it; but must he not be content to serve in the ranks, with no title for a high command? Men will yield him esteem, but his measuredness will be responded to by measuredness on their part. No church will be dedicated to his name, no new society will be formed to perpetuate his influence. There is a Lutheran Church and a Calvinist, but none which names itself after Erasmus. In the English Church a broad-minded and judicious Tillotson could keep many professional men religious in a difficult age, but the narrower and more vivid religion of Wesley was required to

revive religion in the people at large, and to inspire a reorganization which is now the largest of all the Churches of Protestantism.

Few Englishmen had a more nobly harmonious character than Bishop Berkeley, with 'every virtue under heaven,' as even Pope exclaimed: and above all with a special desire for the conversion of the heathen in our expanding colonies: but it was not to him but to the forces coursing in the narrower channels of Wilberforce and Carey and Coke that the English Missionary Societies owed their origin. It was not till Chalmers passed out of the well-balanced Moderatism of his early manhood that he entered upon his career as the the most influential Scotsman of his day. At Oxford, Keble was of exquisite balance and exerted invaluable influence, but would there have been a commotion, a 'movement,' in English religion without the heavier but more specialized forces of Newman and Pusey? Vaughan could succeed Tillotson in the time-honoured pulpits of University and Temple Churches, but it was for Spurgeon, with a few religious ideas passionately held, that a new Tabernacle had to be built where none was before. In the new England group it was not the comprehensive religious temper of Oliver Wendell Holmes, but the more exclusive transcendentalism of Emerson, that projected a high light, acclaimed around him there and radiating across to us on this side of the Atlantic.

The recognition of this comparative ineffectiveness presses all the more heavily upon the soul which has set the service of God amongst men within the essence of its religious ideal. Those who find ultimate significance in the words "For their sakes I sanctify myself," may have to endure the bitterness of apparent failure on account of their loyalty.

But hesitations, though recurring, must be only momentary. He to whom comprehensiveness and order are essential constituents of the ideal religious character, whose faith in God extends over His whole creation and expands over the human soul in its integral entirety, trusts God alike for his own personal advancement in the way towards saintliness, and for the concurrent exercise of beneficent vocation among his fellow-men.

THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE.

By Professor Albert A. Cock, University College, Southampton.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

Psychology, particularly child psychology, is still a comparatively young branch of learning, and in dealing with religious experience in youth, in childhood and adolescence, it is apt to betray the rashness and impetuosity of its own youth. I shall begin, therefore, by pointing out that there must necessarily be an infinite diversity in the religious experiences of youth. Those experiences will vary according to the credal environment into which the child is born, and in which he is educated. If it be that described in Mr. Gosse's *Father and Son*, an incipient note of rebellion will characterise all the child's religious experiences. This will be due to the unnatural repression of his emotional and imaginative powers and the restricted scope for individual action. If, however, the environment be that of an educated Catholic family, a certain happy equilibrium between the individual and the social aspects of religion will be conspicuous, together with a peculiar intense joy not often found in the early religious experiences of militant Protestantism. But some pull in the direction opposite to the credal environment is commonly to be observed, and religious training may be adjudged by its success or failure in meeting and winning over this pull.

Again, religious experience in youth undoubtedly varies with race, with sex, with the age of the individual, with the social status, and, (a point to be ever borne in mind) with the period of history in which we live. Our early religious experiences are not a point for point duplication of those of our fathers and forefathers. There is a distinctive note about the religious experience of those whose childhood was mid-Victorian. The period was transitional, and the note (it may be suggested) was negative; it lacked the 'first fine careless rapture' of, say, the 12th century, the childhood of St. Francis.

We are therefore bound to speak with caution, and to be always subject to correction on our topic. Dr. Starbuck's well-

known book on the *Psychology of Religion*, for instance, is based upon an exceedingly limited field of observation. His treatment of conversion is founded upon less than 200 complete cases, and almost all of these are Protestant and domiciled in the United States. The *questionnaire* method, which must necessarily be a principal source of information, is open to many difficulties. The introspective powers of the respondents are unknown and unchecked, while many factors, such as assent to the revelations made, the desire for something in the nature of spiritual 'window-dressing,' &c., cannot be wholly eliminated.

James's famous *Varieties of Religious Experience* also has its limitations. The types dealt with are largely abnormal, and illustrated from the abnormal, while in both cases the material is adult, not juvenile, and it is dangerous to argue from maturity backwards. The literature of the saints, including for instance, that of Wesley's first preachers, affords us better direct material, but here also it is adult, not adolescent. Nor is Biblical literature specially helpful to us in our problem. It contains a treasury for the study of the 'childhood of the race,' but that is not the same thing as childhood itself. Biblical records are too mature, real children are not conspicuous therein, while the glimpses we do get are too few, and almost confined to boys. We must, then, rely largely upon direct observation of young persons, upon the poets, and upon personal introspection and recollection, all of a tentative character.

2.—CHILDHOOD.

Assuming, then, that the child is born into a religious environment, we notice that, from the first, two elements emerge and are presented in his religious experience. There are things to do, and things to believe: observances to be practised, and articles of faith to hold. The things to do are naturally more attractive, more manageable for the young mind, than the things to believe. Imagination speedily imparts to religious acts, rites and ceremonies, a significance which may not be orthodox, but which is at any rate individual. Hence, while these observances are largely external, and conformity is a conspicuous note of early religious experience, that externality and conformity are not without an inner side from the very

first. For the things to do are always associated with and accompanied by things to believe, and belief in God, a god, is the unifying centre for all external observances. I suggest that the child reads these acts as the various signatures of God. They are ways in which the Divine Name is uttered and expressed. Imagination invests all the externals of religion as so many great spellings, like

> "Young Samuel, spelling with hushed breath,
> The Name of Deity."

It follows, therefore, that if the religious environment have but a poor range of observance and ceremonies that appeal to the young imagination, then the young concept of God must become either impoverished or too austere. For, while it is true that for the adult the end of thought is action, that ideas always tend to discharge themselves in actions, the converse also holds in youth; actions issue into thoughts. In the one case, thought is the *terminus a quo*, in the other it is the *terminus ad quem*.

There are, then, things to think as well as to do in early religious experience, and this thinking is stimulated and enriched by things done. The thinking is very credulous—this is a commonplace of child-psychology, but it is not wholly so, for just because it is thinking it is bound to be sceptical, *i.e.*, questioning. The things done in church, chapel, and night-prayers, may be ways of spelling the Divine Name, but the young intellect is true to its primary function, to prove all things, hence it will check these spellings. Still, since in childhood things done loom larger than things thought, credulity rather than incredulity is the chief intellectual note, and a "limited" Deity is foreign to it. It may be pointed out, however, that credulity is extended in chief to ideas and doctrines that come from sources that are loved. There is an authority conferred by love which is of the utmost significance in our early religious apprehensions. It accounts for the general optimism of childhood and for the eventual mellowing of our conception of God after the period of adolescent storm and stress. But the point I wish to emphasise is that from our earliest childhood religion is found to consist of these two inseparable elements, thought and action. It presents itself

in two forms, as a way of living and as a way of thinking. This double aspect dominates all our spiritual history. That history is a problem, an adventure, a quest. We have to unify the way of living with the way of thinking.[1] We have, indeed, to determine whether the system of beliefs is *the* way of thinking, and whether the system of observances is *the* way of living. Are they *the* way or merely *a* way? That is the problem of religious experience from the start.

In childhood, the way of thinking is largely the way of imaging. Especially is this true of religious experiences, for these are, *ex. hyp.*, concerned with an unseen Being. When reproductive imagination (which is limited to remembered percepts for its material) passes into creative imagination, then we have a distinct step forward. The child enters the animistic stage and conceives of God under material forms, upon the analogy of perceptual experience. This creative power proceeds from the subjective state of belief, and without this factor of belief creative imagination is incomprehensible.[2] Religious myths will always have their place and appeal at this stage, because they are the natural products of creative imagination, while, at the same time, since imagination contains an intellectual factor, these myths are constructions of the universe which will for long satisfy the intellectual needs of childhood. They are, however, subject to continual criticism from developing reason, and this criticism reaches an acute stage during adolescence.

One aspect of juvenile religious imagination has not, I think, been sufficiently observed. It is not merely that the child's credulity takes naturally to symbolic ceremonies and to symbolic myths. His aesthetic sense is also developing, and this, too, finds satisfaction in such material. The young delight in beauty of form, rhythm, colour, sound, not merely in so far as these may symbolise or suggest intellectual truths but also for their own aesthetic sake. The Christian girl finds at the heart of her religious experiences a Mother and Child. "I think there is no more beautiful sight in the world than a mother with a babe in her arms," wrote a ten year old girl in a recent L.C.C.

[1] See Stephen Graham's *Quest of the Face.*

[2] See Ribot: *Creative Imagination.*

Scholarship examination. The boy has, as his parallel, that Child become a successful Hero of action. These spectacles alone, the Mother and Child, and the World-Hero, have an intrinsic aesthetic value which commend them to the boy and girl as a guarantee of their final trueness. The intrinsic beauty of the central doctrines of religion is their primary commendation to the young. Holiness *per se* is not specially attractive, the beauty of holiness is. Sufficient account has not, I think, been taken of the important work to be done by poetry, music, and art in deepening and developing the religious sense of children.

From this emerges another factor. In beauty there is always an element of the incomprehensible. This also makes its appeal to the religious emotions, and makes for their organisation into an abiding religious sentiment. I can remember as a boy being but little moved by the Apostles' Creed, but being quite carried away by the majestic rhythm of the clauses of the Nicæan Creed and the Athanasian recitative. Because of this large appeal of the incomprehensible, such rites as the Eucharist have a natural attraction for childhood. There is simplicity, drama, infinite mystery, and beauty harmonising all. I have carefully observed the religious emotions of a boy of ten, starved by the rigidity and poverty of the Plymouth Brethren's "meeting" to which he is taken week by week, responding most eagerly when occasion offers, to the music, the movement and the dignity of church services. And in my own experience, when I learnt that in Baptism we are made "children of grace," I wondered why, if that were so, our clothes did not more adequately reflect the 'grace'! "Grace" had no very clear theological meaning for me, but it did suggest something attractive, something of charm, and ever after it became a kind of criterion for me in evaluating religious sects.

The imaginative and aesthetic factors in religious experience enable the child to differentiate between it and morality proper. He never wholly identifies morality with religion. This cuts both ways, of course. It prevents him from ever being completely satisfied with ethical substitutes for religion; at the same time, it tends in childhood to lead to an artificial exclusion of morality from religion. It is the work of adolescent life to

correct this, either by conversion or by some less drastic process.

The part played by fear has probably been exaggerated. Starbuck's and Jevons' enquiries shewed that fear is less prominent than love, and love we have already seen, authorises beliefs. Hence, *a priori*, love in the person of the mother teacher, guide, and friend will not sanction the intrusion of terrifying beliefs. Nor will God, who is Love, approve of a religion of terror. The ordinary phobias of childhood are not to be ascribed to religion. Indeed, fear proper seems to be more prominent in adolescence than in childhood. It is also more prominent in primitive religion, through its connexion with immortality.[3]

The place of prayer in early religious experience is a matter needing more research. The child prays largely by instruction, example, and, possibly, by instinct. It is therefore necessary that the instruction should be wise and the example consistent. But he also has his own special prayers and prayer-tendencies. He raises no question about a particular or even a special Providence, but prays for private benefits, naturally and unashamed. His sense of the unity of all things enables him to pray equally for parent, dog, or doll. Moreover, he quickly learns the insufficiency of his external intercourse with external selves, and so he "talks to God" by himself. This is, for him, prayer. And he must pray his own prayers in his own way.[4] The further organisation of his prayer-life greatly depends upon environment, and it becomes the touchstone of reality for his whole religious experience. Prayer for and to the dead seems to come quite naturally to some children, and I have known cases where a curious dualism is practised by the child, who prays to God when he desires to be good, but to the devil when he wants to be "real naughty." The undirected prayers of children often tend to simple petitions for the preservation of beauty. In the notes made during silence periods by girls who were practising silence as a religious aid, I have frequently come across invocations expressing gratitude for beauty and joy therein.

[3] Space forbids a fuller treatment of this point.

[4] cf. *Ex Ore Infantium*. Francis Thompson.

Let me sum up this part of my paper by saying that while "religion is, on the whole, distinctively external" in childhood, it certainly has a subjective side. It is largely imaginative, but an intellectual factor is, nevertheless, present. It is markedly credulous, especially where love gives belief its attraction; it has an easy and a natural sense of the unseen, while my own observation shews that it is much more aesthetic in character than is commonly supposed. This aesthetic side is evidenced in the part played by the Sacred Book, for the Bible primarily appeals to the young as a collection of great tales, some stirring, some sad, all delightful to read and to imagine. At this stage the sense of sin is not very acute, but the fundamental distinction between right and wrong is made very early. Dogma presents little difficulty, and is even necessary, owing to the persistent craving for definition, but the interest is aesthetic rather than intellectual.

3.—ADOLESCENCE.

There is general agreement that childhood ends at about the twelfth year. Adolescence then makes its start, and runs on until about the twenty-fifth year, and it is in some respects the most complex and critical period of life. It has been designated the age of loyalty by Mr. Homer Lane, but it is equally the age of rebellion and disloyalty. No one label can exhaust the fertility of adolescence. And on the religious side it is bewildering in its variety.

(a) Remembering the twofold way of living and thinking, the first dominant feature that we mark is that in adolescence the way of thinking becomes more urgent than the way of living. Storm, stress, doubt, alienation all arise. It is the age of conversions—and of perversions. The imaginative elements, hitherto so powerful, are now challenged by a reason which has become conscious of its critical powers. Great issues are at stake here, and great tact and wisdom are required on the part of religious guides and institutions. If reason emerge solely supreme, with imagination a victim at its feet, then religion is displaced by some more or less philosophical construction, often negative in character. If imagination remain solely supreme, then religion becomes either mere superstition, or

else a shut-off compartment in life. What the adolescent seeks is such a reconstruction of the way of thinking that the way of living may be justified. Often, indeed, the struggle proves too hard, and then he may lapse into indifferentism or into a purely conventional orthodoxy almost as barren.

This conflict between imagination and reason accounts for the violent contrasts in the religious experiences of adolescence. We find extremes meeting in one and the same individual; a riotous devotion to ritual with a remorseless resort to revelation apart from reason and even sheer scepticism from the rational standpoint. Prayer is now abandoned, now the vehicle of passionate penitence. The competing attractions of art and ethics are keenly realised; imagination turning with a new understanding to art, and reason turning with a new sympathy to ethics. Hence it is that adolescence is *par excellence* the period of conversions. But whether we have the sudden irruption of conversion in the "twice-born," or the less stormy but equally real growth and expansion of the "once-born," the central feature is the same, the effort of personality to find in the religious sentiment and the religious life the rallying point and unifying power of all the interests of life. Religious experience now is the soul's efforts to systematise all its experiences into a coherent whole for thought and action, organised in right relations to Nature, Man, and God. For this reason, the need for a training in vocation is very urgent. Not vocational schools, but schools for the discovery of vocation are required.

(b) The intensity of the struggle for a clear and organised way of thinking means that the adolescent must translate whatever theology his credal environment presents to him into terms of his own experience satisfying intellect, emotions, and imagination, and making adequate demands upon his will. Starbuck's analyses and tables suggest that at this stage the doctrines of supreme interest (in order of importance) are those of God, Christ, and Immortality. There is no doubt that the adolescent is driven to explore the philosophical groundwork of theism by his intellectual needs at this juncture. He is rapidly finding the unsatisfactoriness of finite personalities, and the satisfaction he normally finds in one person of the

opposite sex is in part due to an ideal, the recognition of something greater than really appears therein. A judgment of comparative worthlessness is followed by an inference to an infinitely Perfect Being with Whom he is in real though inner communion. The capture of adolescent allegiance by the Person of Christ is an equally crucial problem. Belief in immortality, however, is probably less urgent, provided values are conserved. At the same time, his developing social instincts have several consequences. They lead him to a greater appreciation of the corporate life with its obligations to service. This in its turn drives on to a keener interest in historical continuity, and this to the all-pervading influence of the Person of Christ. Recognition of this may or may not take the acute form of conversion, but there is, as a rule, confirmation (frequently later than the actual rite thereof). Where this loyalty to Christ is aroused, then, whether once-born or twice-born, the adolescent knows what Wordsworth knew:—

> "I made no vows,
> But vows were then made for me: bond unknown
> Was given that I should be, else sinning greatly,
> A dedicated spirit."

In a different quarter we find a great description of a singularly intense experience of this kind in the "Hound of Heaven." Yet it is the same poet, Francis Thompson, who illustrates the under-current of adolescent scepticism when he writes:—

> "There is no expeditious road
> To pack and label men for God,
> And save them by the barrel load.
> Some may, perchance, with glad surprise,
> Have blundered into Paradise."

(c) But besides these intellectual and imaginative factors, adolescent religious experience is highly emotional, particularly in respect of sin. This is in part due to the dawning sense of marriage as a *vocation*. The disparity between the real and the ideal is vividly realised and frequently lamented. All religions have to recognise the heightened sense of sin during adolescence, and certain of them may even be said to specialise in it. It is not bound to occur early, but may arise quite late. For example, the conversion of St. Catherine of Genoa did not occur until her twenty-seventh year, and the actual experience

was comparatively brief though highly intense. "She kept crying out within herself, 'No more world, no more sins.'"[5]

The sense of sin, then, is a normal feature and a frequent prelude to conversion. As such, it has already been considered at this Conference. There is, however, one aspect which is perhaps too little noticed, and that is that the sense of sin and the experience of conversion are often rhythmical and recurrent. I am not thinking of the regular confession of a normal "penitent," but of the liability of the adolescent to sudden repeated uprushes of penitence and conversion. It has been noticed that the convert generally attains to stability and tends to stick to his newly found centre of allegiance, despite subsequent "dryness." Starbuck makes a point of this, and it is a marked feature of Dr. Caldecott's interesting researches on this subject.[6] What I am concerned with, however, is a rather different type; cases where the individual appears to have periods of penitence and conversion, which are intermittent but recurrent. They exercise a cathartic function, and he uses them as he uses the waters at Harrogate. Revivalist meetings, of course, appeal to this type, and they may be met with at annual conferences, *e.g.*, of the Student Christian Movement, while I have known Salvation Army youths who refer to their six-monthly visits to the "penitent form" as a desirable and useful purge. They are neither "once born" nor "twice born," but *oft born.*

(d) Accompanying the sense of sin is a passion for perfection. Once more, this is an expression of Love. This expresses itself in various ways: in the heightened sense of solidarity with some religious body wherein may be experienced the communion of saints as well as the forgiveness of sins: in the increasing importance of the mystical and sacramental sides of worship, and in the prayer-life. This passion for perfection is the religious expression of the idealism and hero-worship of adolescence. The age of loyalty means loyalty to a leader, seen or unseen, and the leader is, to his subjects, a fit subject for reverence and worship. It will be remembered that two years ago, in dealing with objections to Christian Ethics, Dr.

[5] Von Hugel: *Mystical Element of Religion*, i. 105.
[6] Proc. Aristotelian Soc., 1909-1911.

Caldecott alluded at this Conference to the difficulty modern idealists have in reconciling growth of the moral ideal with the attribution of a realised perfection to the Person of Christ. "The conception of freedom has become so fundamental," he wrote, "that the presentation of an attained perfection appears incompatible with it."[7] This is not contradictory of our present point, however, for the latter is a passion for perfection in adolescent life and not an intellectual problem in mature life. I think, however, that if we recognize the adolescent passion for perfection we can to some extent meet the difficulty raised at Oxford. For "realised perfection" is ambiguous. The perfection was realised in Christ (or rather, presented, for the terms of tense are inapplicable to an eternal Being) but is it realised in us? And to be realised means two things: to be realised as an accomplished fact, *and to be realised or understood in its meaning*. The adolescent passion for perfection is a passion to realise in himself what he knows can be realised in the future because it was and is realised or presented in Christ; and it is also a passion to understand, to interpret the *perfection of the perfection* (an aesthetic problem, in short, for the would-be saint).

It is in the light of this passion for perfection that we can understand the marked tendency in adolescence to select lesser objects of devotion, such as the saints. For in them the youth finds an interpretation and an approximation of the perfection of Christ not too far removed from his own present possibilities.

(e) But although adolescent religious experience is so largely subjective and individual, it also has a strong social and objective expression in action. Things to do become newly interesting: sacraments, sodalities, and other outlets for individual service are sought and found. This is not merely due to the abounding physical vitality of this period, but also to the impetus given by any experience of conversion to spread the good news, now first fully realised. It is here surely that the Church of to-day must recognise that the adolescent of to-day is, in the main, better educated than he was some centuries ago, and that therefore, he must be given some work to do for himself? The adolescent is a lover, and it is the

[7] *Modern Churchman*, Oct., 1916.

proud privilege of lovers to *work* for the beloved, and not merely to be kept in a state of perpetual adoration before a tabernacle, however beautiful.[8] But the work must be such as will command his intellectual respect.

(f) There remain two problems to which I will briefly refer.

(1) The first of these is the problem of morality. Religion claims the whole of adolescent allegiance, and the moral code must be unified with the religious, and *vicê versâ*. The adolescent of to-day therefore expects religion to give him a clear lead on matters of public and private morality. He looks for a lead in the matter of sex-morality, particularly in connexion with the marriage-bond: for a lead in the matter of economic morality (for he is, as a rule, a worker in some economic field); and for a lead in matters of international morality, for his heightened corporate consciousness makes him realise his oneness with all men, and that in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free. In the same context, the adolescent expects his religion to give him a clear lead on war and the problem of subject races.

(2) And there is the problem of prayer. I say problem, advisedly, for whereas in childhood prayer is a natural act which can be made into an habitual practice, in adolescence the imaginative and intellectual factors powerfully affect prayer and make the practice a problem indeed. "Prayer," says Dr. Jevons, "is considered simple because it is familiar, not because it *is* simple."

(a) The actual form of prayer is a problem. We oscillate between liturgical and private prayers, between vocal and silent, periodical and spontaneous prayers. Retreats, where the adolescent has experience of them, merely accentuate this particular aspect of the general problem.

(b) Still more is the content of prayer a problem. The old unquestioning faith in a special Providence in most cases goes, hardly to return. Yet purely general prayers seem strange and unreal, while intercessory prayer, which makes a powerful appeal to the youth, at the same time seems impossible when the person himself needs intercession.

(c) The reality and value of prayer are a specially acute problem for adolescence. The practice is often suspended,

[8] cp. R. Kipling, *The Glory of the Garden*.

perhaps entirely forgone, for this reason. This is not always due to a mistaken desire for a feeling of "sensible devotion." It is often due to the dwarfing of imagination by reason. "Shades of the prison-house begin to close."

(d) Finally, the validity of prayer itself is a problem, especially to the modern adolescent who picks up a smattering of psychological terms and hears about "auto-suggestion." I have myself found this the greatest difficulty of adolescent students, and I feel that the need of a considered Christian metaphysic of prayer (if it be possible) is very great indeed. Part of the fascination which Rome has for adolescents is to be found in the fact that to them the saints and religious of the Roman Church appear to have the secret of the prayer-life. Mr. Fosdick's excellent little book on prayer[9] does not profess to meet this urgent need for an exposition of the philosophy of prayer.

If we may try (though it is dangerous) to express our conclusions in a brief word, we would say that the note of religious experience in childhood is to *conform*, and in adolescence to *transform*. Dare we say that thereafter it is to *reform and inform?*

THE VALIDITY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

By the Very Rev. Hastings Rashdall, D.Litt., F.B.A.,
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When a phrase becomes a "blessed word," it becomes a very dangerous thing. It is hardly a paradox to say that, in the region of philosophy, a truth which has become a catch-word or badge of a particular school or tendency, is in a fair way to pass into a falsity. The danger is certainly not less when the subject is one which concerns religion. In large circles "religious experience" is the "blessed word" of the moment; and that word is now employed with a laxity which tends—to say the least of it—to intellectual confusion.

[9] Student Movement publications.

Of course nobody denies the existence of religious experience as a psychological phenomenon. Nobody denies the existence of religious ideas, religious belief, religious emotion. And the present fashion of treating these religious phenomena—whether those which are commonly accounted normal or those which are, more or less, abnormal—as subjects of serious enquiry, as things which cannot be simply disposed of by the use of such terms as insanity or hysteria, hallucination or neurosis, may be welcomed. But when religious people eagerly jump at the present willingness of psychologists to deal with such subjects in a serious spirit, when they let themselves talk about dismissing logic or metaphysic as the obsolete delusions of an older world, and appeal to psychology as the new, up-to-date science which is going to place religion upon an unassailable foundation, they forget that psychology has got nothing to do with the truth of religious beliefs—that is to say, of any beliefs which assert anything beyond the fact that such and such a person has such and such a subjective experience. From the psychological point of view the fact that Luther had an experience of seeing the devil and that Kant had an experience of duty, are precisely on the same level. If a modern enquirer comes to the conclusion that Luther's belief in the objective presence of the devil at Wartberg in 1521 was a mere delusion, while Kant's belief in an objective experience of the moral law was a true belief, it is not as a psychologist that he draws the distinction. When a confused thinker constructs a syllogism with an undisturbed middle, or some such logical fallacy, in it and is quite satisfied with his conclusion, it is not the psychologist who can pronounce his inference false. Psychology knows nothing of the difference between false syllogisms and valid ones. There is a sense in which all religious belief must rest upon the facts of psychology, since the most important data which we have for constructing our theory of the universe are the facts about the spiritual nature of man. Human sensations, thoughts, emotions, volitions, are all psychological facts; but if, upon the basis of any of these mental phenomena, we construct a theory as to the nature of God or of the universe as a whole, we do not do so as psychologists, and it is not psychology

which can tell us whether our belief is true or false. The notion that a religion can be constructed which involves no logic and no metaphysic, is, I venture to think, simply a delusion. I think it is well to put this point clearly, but, of course, it does not by itself settle anything as to the validity of the appeal to religious experience as a source of knowledge. This appeal seems to be made in a number of different senses. A few of which—I have only time to deal with a few—I will now attempt to distinguish.

(1) In the mouths of some philosophers the assertion appears to mean that religion is not concerned with objective truth or falsehood at all. Religious experience is not only the foundation of religion: it *is* religion, and the whole of it. When Mr. Herbert Bradley says that "the man who demands a reality more solid than that of the religious consciousness seeks he knows not what," he appears to mean that religious experience is all that the religious man wants, no matter how little any reality beyond the experience corresponds to it. It would be impossible to deal with this view thoroughly without discussing Mr. Bradley's system as a whole. It is perhaps sufficient to say that it is a view which will not satisfy most religious persons—least of all the persons who use the kind of language about religious experience with which I am now chiefly concerned. They believe that religious experience authorizes them to make certain statements about the objective nature of the universe.

(2) There are persons who by the appeal to religious experience seem to mean that the fact that they have certain religious emotions warrants their asserting certain things about the object of such emotions. This notion seems to be so extravagant that I do not quite see how to set about refuting it. Savages have felt all sorts of emotions towards all sorts of deities: does this emotion prove the objective existence of all the Pantheons of all the polytheistic religions? And surely it is quite arbitrary to contend that, though the emotion does not prove the existence of all or any of these polytheistic deities, it does prove that some deity exists. And even if this could be admitted, it would be no very valuable discovery unless we know something about that deity—whether he is to

be invested with the character attributed by Ahab to Moloch or with that which the Jewish prophets ascribed to Jehovah or with the attributes which are ascribed by Christians to the God of Christianity. I cannot see how a subjective emotion can prove the existence of its object. Moreover, the emotion itself implies an already existing belief. The intellectual belief cannot be due merely to the emotion: however the belief be arrived at (whether by tradition, imagination, authority, inference true or false), the emotion implies that the intellectual belief is already there. Destroy that belief, and it goes. Let the savage chief be convinced by the arguments of the missionary that his idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands, and he no longer feels the old awe, the old fear, the old trust when he approaches them. It is the same with the higher types of religious emotion. The biographies of those who have given up the religion of their childhood are full of testimony to that effect. Renan, as the famous Professor of the College de France, certainly no longer experienced the awe with which he had knelt before the host in the Cathedral of Tréguier or even the awe with which he had then regarded the moral law.

(3) With others, the appeal to religious experience as the foundation of religious belief amounts simply to the assertion that there is such a thing as an immediate or intuitive or *a priori* knowledge of God's existence. It is impossible to discuss the subject without making the avowal that (so far as I can analyse my own thoughts) I have no such intuitive knowledge myself. When I have intuitive knowledge, I find it impossible to doubt. I could not possibly doubt that two and two make four, that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, that nothing can begin to be without a cause, that certain premisses necessitate certain conclusions.[1] But the existence of God, unfortunately, I find it quite possible to doubt, and, when doubts arise in my mind, I have to meet them by arguments or rational considerations of one kind or another. At an early age my belief was, of course, due solely to authority,

[1] I cannot here deal with the highly technical argument of those who deny *any* "isolated" intuition in the sense of a full and final validity, not liable to correction or modification from the rest of our knowledge.

suggestion, environment; the fact that I have retained—of course, with some modification in my conception of God—the belief of my childhood, is due (so far as I can see) to the influence of these rational considerations. Knowledge of that kind is not immediate or intuitive. I do not know of any sort of immediate knowledge, or anything which can be at all plausibly called immediate knowledge, which bears the least resemblance to this alleged immediate knowledge of another spiritual being. It may be doubted whether even my knowledge of myself can properly be called immediate, in the strict sense of the word, since it is only by reflecting on what is implied in many successive states of mind that I construct the notion of a continuous self. I will not say that my knowledge of myself is an "inference;" it may better be described as an "intellectual construction." But certainly my knowledge of other people's existence is a matter of inference. No philosopher has ever doubted this, so far as I know, till quite recently, and even now the contrary view has hardly been asserted outside Oxford, and no systematic defence of so parodoxical an opinion has ever yet been produced even in Oxford.

The fact that I, personally, am conscious of no such immediate knowledge of God would, no doubt, by itself, prove little. But I am sure that the vast majority of my fellow-men, including the most religious of them, are in the same state of mind. Missionaries do not find that they can assume a knowledge of God in their hearers; they have to prove it by arguments—good, bad, or indifferent. The arguments may often be "pragmatical," but they are, none the less, arguments. They get no converts till they are thought to have proved it. Whole populations are without the idea of one God; some savages can hardly be said to believe in many gods. Educated Chinamen or Japanese, we are told, do not usually believe either in one God or in many. Individuals among ourselves, who are brought up without "religious education," do not commonly possess this belief. If I confine myself to Christians, I read fathers, schoolmen, modern theologians, without ever coming across a single trace of such a claim to such immediate knowledge. I do not say there are no exceptions. The great masters of philosophical thought, including the most theistic,

never suggest such a notion. It is equally absent from the thought of what I may call the professional metaphysicians, and from that of men of essentially religious genius. Martineau's belief in God was reached by way of inference—chiefly from our experience of causality in our voluntary action, which is extended by inference to the cause of all phenomena. Newman declares that the existence of God and of self constituted for him the two great certainties; but he declares also that his reason for believing in God is the existence of his own moral consciousness. A belief for which a reason, a "because," can be given, is not immediate. In truth the claim to an immediate knowledge of God was almost confined to the small group of writers of different ages who are called mystics, and by them this knowledge is usually supposed to be obtainable only by a long course of meditation. The mystics have always been few. The great religious leaders of mankind, the main currents of religious thought, the vast mass of believers in any religion, or, at all events, in any definitely theistic religion, have not been mystics in any strict sense of that very ambiguous and much-abused word. The average religious man equally disclaims any such immediate consciousness. The simple Christian declares that his belief rests on faith. Whatever faith means for him, it certainly does not mean the same thing as sight.[2]

These considerations would, no doubt, by themselves not disprove the validity of an intuitive knowledge of God in the comparatively few persons who, with full knowledge of its meaning, actually make the claim. A self-evident truth does not necessarily mean a truth which is evident to everybody. As a rule, indeed, a belief which is really self-evident is found, or is capable of being awakened by a sufficient amount of education and reflection, in the normal human consciousness; but there is nothing inconceivable in the conception of an intellectual insight, or, if you please, a super-intellectual insight, which is possessed by very few persons. And I should be quite prepared to attach great importance to the testimony

[2] No one has insisted more than the Editor of *The Challenge* upon the importance of religious experience; yet, in an article of August 9th, 1918, I read: "Faith is not knowledge, and its spiritual value depends upon the fact that it contains a real hazard."

of such persons if I found that there was any agreement in what they tell us about God. But, in point of fact, there is none. I do not know a single proposition about God which is not asserted by some mystics to be self-evidently true, by others to be self-evidently false. I put aside such claims to immediate knowledge as extend to the whole content of traditional religion. One does find, of course, men not wholly illiterate who claim to know intuitively the fact of the Virgin Birth, or the truth of the Christian Creed as a whole. But even if we confine ourselves to the more philosophical kind of mystic, who does not claim any immediate knowledge of historical facts, we find the flattest contradictions. The Christian mystic of anything approaching an orthodox type usually asserts that God is a Person or a Spirit; many a Hindoo mystic is equally sure that He is not personal. The Christian mystic thinks of Him as righteous and loving; for the Hindoo mystic, or some Hindoo mystics, it is a degradation to ascribe moral qualities to the Deity; morality for them is a purely human and very contemptible affair of no cosmic significance. God is beyond good and evil. The Buddhist mystic's insight may extend beyond this; sometimes he is agnostic, or may even know immediately the non-existence of anything which the Western mind could recognise as God at all.

It is admitted by the late Professor William James, who is largely responsible for the present disposition to rely upon intuitions which the philosopher admits that he does not himself possess, that, when these intuitions differ, the differences must be held to cancel one another. The residual creed, which remains after this cancelling out process has been performed, is surely something so vague and exiguous, even upon James' own showing, that it does not really seem to make much difference whether one believes it or not. The most that it comes to, according to his own showing, is that there is some consciousness beyond that of the individual. But even that is, I think, more than would be accepted by all the claimants to immediate knowledge. For consciousness is not a universally admitted predicate of Deity as conceived of in the East, and, indeed, predicates are just what the most

profound philosophical mystics have denied to the Deity. His nature can only be expressed by negations. In fact, if this cancelling process is fairly carried out, nothing will remain but the famous creed of Parmenides—that Being is, and not Being is not. And, indeed, if we turn to some of the mystical utterances, this difference, too, must be transcended; and then nothing will remain but the assertion that the mystic is conscious of that which may be indifferently described as Being or as Not-being. To some, perhaps, such an abstraction must be an acceptable object of worship. For myself, I would rather have a slight probability of the existence of something like the Christian Deity than an intuitive certainty of this kind. It will be observed that no moral qualities are even claimed for this residual Deity of Professor James.

Are we then to say that the appeal to immediate intuitions, or what appear to the person experiencing them to be such, is worthless? Far from it. I am sorry that from the nature of the case I have been obliged to make my argument chiefly negative and destructive: I have no time to develope what I believe to be the real basis for religious belief beyond saying that, for me, belief in God rests upon the sort of arguments which, in a developed and systematic form, are to be found in the writings of theistic philosophers and philosophical theologians. What amount of truth or validity there is in the various lines of thought which have at various times constituted the actual grounds of religious belief, I must not attempt to examine; I must be content with barely suggesting in the vaguest possible way the elements of truth which I can recognize in this attempt to base religious belief upon the appeal to the apparently spontaneous and immediate deliverances of the religious consciousness, whether in the average religious man or in the exceptionally gifted religious natures:

(1) Very often what presents itself to the plain man as a self-evident religious truth is a really rational argument for belief, but one which he has never analysed and perhaps could not analyse. There is in it an element of inference, which may be quite good and valid inference (though of course it is not so in all cases), but which escapes his own notice. The inference is what is often called "unconscious inference." His

immediate certainty may be based upon the appearances of design and intelligence in nature—upon the kind of argument which is put by St. Luke into the mouth of St. Paul at Athens, and which is developed in a more elaborate form by such men as Socrates, Cicero, Thomas Aquinas, Leibnitz, Paley, von Hartmann, Lord Haldane, M. Bergson, Mr. Balfour. The mere juxta-position of these names shows that I do not mean that all forms of the "argument for design" are equally valid, but still they do all represent attempts to get at the real truth which in a confused form is recognized by the "plain man" when he says "I don't think the world—by this he means the material world—can have made itself. It is clear to me that it must have been planned by, or be ruled by, a conscious intelligence." Or, at the bottom of his mind, there may be a vague notion of the superior value of mind to matter and the consequent necessity of thinking of the ultimate nature of things in terms of mind—a line of thought which, if developed, might lead him to the system of Hegel—one interpretation of Hegel at least—or of Green or of Professor Pringle-Pattison. Or, like Newman, he may be impressed with the fact that his own immediate consciousness of duty can only be fully and adequately explained by the view that moral distinctions are inherent in the mind of God. He may be an unconscious disciple of Butler or of Kant, of Cudworth or of Mansel. And so on. The notion that we can construct a religion which is independent of Metaphysics is a delusion. We are all Metaphysicians, especially those who do not know it. There is no sharp line between the vague and unanalysed thinking of the plain man or the unphilosophical man of religious genius and the analysed and thought-out reasonings or reflections of the philosopher. I have no doubt that to the mind of a Jewish prophet the existence and the attributes of Jehovah presented themselves as intuitive certainties, but that does not exclude the possibility that his convictions (so far as they were not merely traditional) rested upon unconscious processes of reflection. There are many fine rhetorical or poetic passages of the Jewish prophets which might easily be re-written in the form of a Platonic dialogue, a scholastic quaestio, or page of the most modern philosophy.

(2) Although I do not think that there can be said to be a valid intuition of God, it must be remembered that many of the premisses unconsciously employed really are self-evident truths. The most important of these is the consciousness of moral obligation, which does, as it seems to me, require the belief in God for its satisfactory explanation, though I will not say that a theistic argument can be constructed on this basis alone, taken in absolute abstraction from all other elements in our knowledge of the human mind. The argument from an absolute duty to God generally involves some assumptions which might conceivably be disputed, and which it would require other arguments to justify, but at bottom I believe there is no more solid foundation for religious belief than the immediate consciousness of duty.

(3) Sometimes the appeal to religious experience takes the form not so much of a claim to an immediate knowledge of God as of an argument based upon the fact of there being such a thing as religious experience, whether understood as religious emotion or as intellectual belief. The argument then becomes something like a modernized version of the old argument *ex consensu gentium*, which, in the light of modern knowledge, must of course be re-stated in a form which does not imply an absolutely universal belief in a god or gods. Or the implicit argument may rely upon the improbability of our having been created with emotions, aspirations, tendencies to think (if not actual thoughts) the adequate satisfaction of which is denied by the constitution of the universe—a line of thought with which Mr. Balfour has made us very familiar. I should be far from denying the value of such a line of argument, but I do not think it possesses any very great cogency except upon a certain assumption. That assumption is the belief that the universe is ultimately rational. If the universe were really a mindless machine churning out as mere epi-phenomena or accidental bye-products all the conscious experiences which we call thoughts, volitions, emotions, &c., I do not know that a few more unsatisfied desires and aspirations would be any harder to account for than the evolutionary process as a whole or the normal workings of the normal mind. The strength of the argument is really derived from the various lines of

thought which lead us to believe that the universe *is* rational. And when we have once got this premiss, we are pretty well independent of this appeal to the argument based upon the universality of religion in the many or the strength of the religious emotions and beliefs in the most religious natures, though I should cordially recognize its confirmatory value. Religion is one of the things which are most reasonably accounted for on the theistic hypothesis, but it is by no means the only one.

(4) No doubt the aversion which religious minds often feel for the notion that belief in God is really due to an inference springs from the desire to feel that we may in prayer and religious communion come into immediate contact with God—that we may speak with God face to face as a man speaketh with his friend. If we admit that our knowledge of the human friend has equally in it an element which the logician must recognize as an inference, and even an inference which amounts (in strict logic) only to an enormous balance of probability, I do not think that there is any real substance in the objection. The warmth of friendship or family affection was surely never dimmed by the admission that after all one's knowledge of one's nearest relation or one's best friend involves an inference. So it may be with the soul's approach to God; the conviction that prayer puts us into a real relation to God may be, none the less, well-grounded, because the belief in God, like the belief in a friend, involves inference. I may add that this does not involve the corollary that God's knowledge of us is only inferential. It was only in another life that St. Paul expected to know, even as we are already known.

(5) There is nothing in the theory that valid knowledge of God is inferential which need prevent us thinking of religious knowledge, emotion,—religious experience, if you please, in any of its forms or aspects—as being due to inspiration or revelation. When we have once reached our knowledge of God, then we must regard all sorts of true knowledge—and in an especial sense, all religious knowledge and spiritual insight—as implanted in the human mind by God, as due (in the language of Green) to a partial communication to us of the knowledge which is already perfect in the Divine Mind. A

valid inference may be regarded as no less coming from God than an immediate intuition,[8] though doubtless in the Divine Mind we cannot suppose that there is that distinction between immediate apprehension and knowledge reached by way of inference or reflection, which the partial character of our knowledge imposes upon ourselves.

The prophet of the order of Isaiah is no less a true prophet of God, because what present themselves to him as intuitions are really what a prophet of the order of Plato might recognize as an unconscious philosophical argument. But I do not assert that the highest religious ideas of an Isaiah, a St. John or St. Paul, were necessarily arrived at by any process of inference, however unconscious. I cannot, indeed, with M. Auguste Sabatier, regard a thought as necessarily a divine inspiration just because it is not connected, logically or psychologically, with anything previously in the mind; the ideas of madmen are often equally without traceable antecedents, whether logical or psychological. But when the ideas are there, and we have some other reason for regarding them as true, then we need not hesitate to think of them as coming from the Mind from which all truth proceeds. The apparently spontaneous occurrence of such ideas to certain minds may be one of the ways in which God reveals Himself to mankind. And the same consideration may be applied to the dimmer religious instincts or aspirations or dispositions to believe, which ordinary men, not gifted with any exceptional religious insight, may discover in their own minds. These, too, may be a kind of divine inspiration, just so far as they are actually true ideas. What I have been dealing with is not the existence of, or the value of, such apparently immediate religious ideas, emotions, thoughts, experiences, nor again the strength of conviction which they actually bring to the person who experiences them, but the question of their validity from the point of view of the impartial enquirer. Such an enquirer cannot accept all such ideas of another person as true, no matter how strongly that person may declare the immediacy of his insight or the certainty with which they

[8] It should be remembered that all inference rests upon certain laws of thought which are themselves self-evident.

present themselves to him, because (as I pointed out) they are often contradicted by equally confident assertions on the part of others; and, to me at least, the law of contradiction presents itself as the most certain of all immediate certainties, though there are doubtless mystics who claim to have seen through that delusion as well as others. I hold with St. Paul that, while we should not quench the Spirit nor despise prophesyings, we should prove all things, and, only hold fast to that which on reflection presents itself to us as true. Many of the truths which the philosopher may find good grounds for believing may, nevertheless, be such as would never have occurred to him but for the intuitions of the prophet, the poet, the man of religious genius; and yet he is right in demanding some reason for thinking them true. Nor would I deny the reasonableness of attaching great weight to the authority of such gifted personalities in religious matters. The individual may be quite justified in accepting the unproved dicta of the prophet or teacher whom he thinks more likely to be right than himself; belief on authority is perfectly reasonable if we have good grounds for trusting the authority; but when and in so far as I am examining the *ultimate* grounds for belief, I cannot recognize the intuition of God as a valid immediate judgement in the sense in which I do regard my belief in geometrical axioms or in moral obligation as valid immediate judgements. I believe that a knowledge of God is to be reached by way of inference or—to use a term which covers something more than what is usually called logical inference, and which admits, it may be said, some closer approach to immediacy—by a process of reflection.

It rests upon rational grounds which admit of being stated in an articulate and intelligible way—a way not more inadequate than other ways of expressing thought are inadequate to the reality, or which are only more inadequate because the subject-matter to which they relate is one in which, from the nature of the case, language must always in an exceptional degree be inadequate to the thought, and the thought to the reality. Poet, prophet, and philosopher may equally fail to express fully all the truth that they apprehend, or to state with completeness the grounds upon which that truth rests; but

that is a different thing from saying that it rests upon no grounds at all.

The position for which I have contended is one which I believe has the support of nearly all the philosophers, nearly all the theologians, nearly all the great religious minds. Whatever is of value in the testimony of that very small group of men known as Mystics need not be ignored or denied because a more analytical mind might discover that their thought too was partly inference or because, when it is not so, such minds demand some rational grounds for accepting what they intuitively pronounce to be true. Do not many at least of the Psychologists assure us that a great part of what we think we see with the bodily eye is really inference? Faith was not, it is of the last importance to remember, for men like St. Paul opposed to Reason, but only to Sight.

THE VALIDITY OF THE ARGUMENT FROM THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

By Professor GRANGER, University College, Nottingham (author of *The Soul of a Christian*).

In proposing to ourselves the task before us, namely, to vindicate the argument from the religious experience to the validity of its object, we start with the impression thrust upon us from many quarters, that we are fighting a losing battle. The progress that is continually being made in the experimental sciences, in physics, in chemistry, in physiology, is contrasted with the slight amount of certainty which is available in the sphere of the religious experience. Mr. Bertrand Russell at the end of his *Problems of Philosophy* finds himself "compelled to renounce the hope of finding philosophical proofs of religious beliefs" (242). I do not quite understand what is meant by philosophical proofs, but for our present purpose I shall take the phrase to mean proofs which possess the same kind of authority as the authority which attaches to arguments which have been demonstrated in the experimental sciences.

Hence, before we go any further, we must examine the arguments which in the physical sciences are found to convince. Some years ago I read

before the Aristotelian Society a paper upon "Intutional Thinking," in which I attempted in a somewhat imperfect manner to disentangle just this element of conviction which is found—so we are told—in the pursuit of mathematics for instance, and cannot be found, so we are also told, in the pursuit of the objects to which the religious experience directs itself. And this element of conviction I found to consist in the immediate apprehension of the thing in itself, as distinguished from the indirect apprehension of the thing through mental impressions and the ideas which arise from them. For if we have no immediate knowledge of the external world, then physics and chemistry and physiology have no immediate knowledge of those parts of the external world with which they are specially occupied. And the argument from the religious experience cannot be expected by the critics who hold the view which we are examining, to furnish an amount of certainty beyond that amount to which the positive sciences—according to them—lay claim. But the kind of conviction which satisfies the exponents of physical science, will not satisfy us. To quote Mr. Russell again, "in some sense it must be admitted that we can never prove the existence of things other than ourselves and our experiences" (34). And all that Mr. Russell can offer us is the choice between two hypotheses: one, that the world is a dream, and the other, the common sense hypothesis that there really are objects independent of us, whose action on us causes our sensations" (35). Now I gather from these two quotations that Mr. Russell himself is not unconscious of the limitations of his own argument. It is only "in one sense" that we cannot prove the existence of things other than ourselves and our experiences. And in the other quotation what does Mr. Russell mean by inserting the word "really" in the statement of the common-sense hypothesis that there are objects independent of us?" The word "really" is only at home in the statements of established theories.

It is from this point that we will start. Common-sense assures the chemist that he is not merely dreaming when he talks of the external world, and when, as now, he turns it to account for engines of destruction. How far can common-sense assure us that we are not dreaming when we speak of God and Christ, and look forward to spiritual peace?

II.

Such a question cannot be answered off-hand, any more than the complex questions of another kind to which, as we have seen, the positive sciences offer more or less satisfactory solutions. How are we to begin? What are those relatively simple facts in the sphere with which we are occupied, from which we may proceed to what is more complex? I should remark, in passing, that these simple facts are only introductory to the exploration of the full religious experience.

Mr. Russell has drawn attention to the circumstance that if we start from the individual consciousness, it is very difficult to be convinced of the reality of anything. What is meant when we appeal to common-sense? It means just this: that the certainty which eludes us so long as we move within the

limits of our individual consciousness, is more attainable—I do not say absolutely attainable—when we pass to experience considered as something shared with another. That is to say, our individual experience is not self-contained. The very use of the pronoun "we" which occurs in the fifth line of *Problems of Philosophy*, involves the intuition of a fellow-creature as real, and not as an inference. If instead of inquiring how we come to know the reality of the external world, we asked how we know that our fellows, you and he, are real, we should find ourselves possessed at once of a standard of reality: a spiritual communion which we can extend from the human to the divine.

But we must guard ourselves against a certain misunderstanding here. The consciousness that we share is not first and foremost the cognitive consciousness that discloses itself to introspection. "Man," says Aristotle, "is a principle of action." Our shared experience is to be considered first as shared impulse, only in the second or transitional stage as shared cognition, in the third and ultimate stage as shared will. The intervening stage of shared cognition has attracted to itself an amount of attention which has somewhat overshadowed the ultimate value of the shared will. In other words the philosophic, *i.e.*, the cognitive attitude towards the religious consciousness, yields in importance to the attitude of the person for whom the religious experience is a matter not of mere "description" which appeals to cognition but of "acquaintance" which is the ground of common activities. And it is the shared will that interprets the previous stage, the shared intuition. "He that doeth His will, shall know of the doctrine."

III.

I will now attempt to prove that the method which is appropriate to the argument from the religious experience, has already been employed with success in the positive sciences, and especially in physics. The dim consciousness of the shared impulse led, first of all, to the personification of natural forces.[1] The god of the clear sky, *Ouranos*, or, in Vedic mythology, *Varuna*, the god of fire, *Agni*, the gods of the sun, of the winds, represented to the primitive mind various energies in the terms of man's own working. And this common attempt to realise the chief objects of nature, goes beyond the solipsism to which an individualist psychology necessarily conducts us. Personification exaggerates the real. Nature religion then passed over into natural philosophy, which attempted to deduce phenomena from the abstract concept of "essence" to which, equally abstract "properties" were attached. The philosophy of nature evaporated the real into its elements regarded separately. The third and final stage in this development came when, in the experimental sciences, natural objects were watched "at work" or set "to work." Here reality was seen as something effective, and was regained.

In the interpretation of the religious experience, we can mark three corresponding stages. Man's hopes and fears, his virtues and his faults, were

[1] The use of gender in the names of inanimate objects is a striking effect of this personification.

in the beginning personified, a process of which Roman religion offers a convenient illustration. In this personification these qualities were projected upon the external world. It was not difficult for the experimenter to overthrow this primitive view, and to show that the reactions of the external world upon his tests, revealed no trace of these persons, or of the moral distinctions which man thought to find, rather too easily, perhaps, in the world about him. In the second stage, which is represented to us by the Platonic theory of ideas, the virtues and vices were referred to abstractions separate from the world of sense. After their exaggerated personification, Plato volatilised the human qualities we know into shadows of the Ideal. Physical science, as against Platonic idealism, then proceeded to deduce—for example, in the pages of Herbert Spencer—all happenings, and therefore virtuous and vicious conduct, not from ideas but from physical causes. But it appeared that this method was inadequate when applied to the sciences concerned with man. Huxley, in his Romanes Lecture, emphasised the distinction with which we are concerned, when he set the ethical process over against the cosmic process. In so distinguishing he broke away from the tradition of which Spencer in England and Haeckel in Germany were the popular representatives. The application of quantitative methods to experimental psychology, had been pursued partly with a view to a mechanical interpretation of human nature; an object which was also thought to be forwarded by a similar use of statistics in the sphere of sociology. Certainly both sociology and psychology have gained vastly by this introduction of higher standards of accuracy. This improvement in method has been recognised by the Royal Society of England, which now includes among the spheres of research that of experimental psychology. But the psychological "reals" which disappear in the presence of physical reagents, live to the utmost when we apply the tests which are appropriate. In psychology, therefore, we can trace a development parallel to the development of the positive sciences: first, personification of forces, secondly, the use of abstract concepts, thirdly, experimental contact with the specific qualities of the real.

IV.

But when we go on to enquire what are the specific qualities of the real which disclose themselves to psychological, as distinguished from physical, tests, we enter upon a new field. And this might have been expected by analogy. As we proceed from the more abstract to the more concrete objects of enquiry, we find at each stage that fresh qualities of the real are dealt with. Our outlook is narrowed as we pass from the inorganic to the organic for instance, but our insight is deepened. What, then, are the chief distinctions with which the psychologist is concerned which are not detected by the reagents of the less complex positive sciences? And here I leave on one side those obscure physical and physiological events which are sometimes thrust into the sphere of the religious experience.

In the first place, there is the distinction between pleasure and pain. This distinction is characteristic, it may fairly be supposed, of all conscious life. But so far as we are studying human as distinguished from animal psychology,

we shall merely take note of this common quality in order to concentrate ourselves upon something more specific.

There is a confusing transition from the pleasure-pain quality of experience to the distinction between the beautiful and the ugly. For it is not enough to identify the beautiful with that which causes pleasure. We can shake off this confusion by a single movement of thought. There are many things not beautiful—sausages for example—which cause pleasure. Hence we may treat the reaction upon the beautiful, as something which does not necessarily belong to all grades of consciousness. The hunger which is satisfied by a rich sunset, is found sometimes but not always. To turn to the opposite of pleasure: man may project his shrinking from pain upon the external world. *Primum in orbe deos fecit timor.* And in his shrinking he may seek out mechanical charms against his terrors. This is the religion of magic, of fetish-worship. And so far as religion remains at this level, man may conceivably be no more religious than his dog. Professor Bergeret, in the pages of Anatole France, analyses with charming insight and sympathy the attitude of his dog, Riquet, to his surroundings as they appear to the canine intelligence.

But man also projects upon the external world, that order which he detects after long and difficult search. The susceptibility to harmony is of a more limited range, I think, than the susceptibility to sensed beauty, such as of a sunset. When Huxley speaks of the cosmic process, he has already accomplished a synthesis which approaches that of religion: a synthesis which compared with that of the savage registers a great advance. Positive science is religious so far as it frees us from our fears and prepares us for that further stage at which Huxley ultimately arrived.

But we must criticise Huxley's separation of the cosmical from the ethical process. Even if the ethical quality of consciousness were confined to man alone of all the constituent parts of the universe, there would still be an ethical aspect of the whole. But religion, in its more characteristic and highest phases, projects upon the cosmic process the qualities of goodness and beauty, just as positive science projects upon the world the element of order which man has first found within his own mind. Incidentally it appears that the scientific apprehension of a world-order, is indistinguishable from a religious experience. Indian religion merges into its churches those whose contemplation is what we regard as non-religious because it is scientific.

At this point the scientific man, the artist, and the saint meet. Just as the artist is not only conscious of the beautiful, but himself creates it, just as the ordered thinking of scientific men is a cause of order, so the saint is not only conscious of the divine element in the world but is himself an instance of that element. The intrusion of beauty, order, and goodness into the cosmic process through the human personality is, in itself, a fact—not less but—more real than the abstract truths with which the relatively abstract sciences deal. I am not concerned, however, to prove that the cosmic process is entirely or even mainly qualified by the good and the beautiful. A limited amount of evidence suffices to establish the validity of

the argument from the religious experience; if, for example, we find even a grain of mustard seed or hear even a still small voice. Against the universal negative of our opponents, I am content to produce but a few instances. St. Francis of Assisi and Nurse Cavell, the unknown poets who wrote the Psalms, the innumerable craftsmen who have transmuted raw materials into immortal treasures, need to be fitted into our account of the whole cosmic process no less than more general and abstract truths. So regarded the cosmic process itself in its totality may become the proper object of worship so far as it is divine. We see all things in God, when we reach out towards the highest that is in God, or to resume an earlier form of statement when our will is in unison with the best that we know in the will of others. We think of the cosmic process as itself the expression of will, and find in it something that goes beyond and includes our own will, as our own will is included in that of a friend.

But this is not the whole rationale of mysticism. There is a further attitude towards experience which makes possible the more intimate analysis of experience. Following our previous method, we shall be content with a bare indication. When it is discerned that some things, and in particular some actions, are better than others, we enter upon an analysis which discloses to us something beyond the mere orderliness of the cosmic process. The mere orderliness of cosmic law fails to satisfy our most authoritative demands. We trace in the light of an interior standard a disorder, an imperfection, which calls for remedy. And this consciousness of imperfection in the cosmic process, is duplicated when we turn our glance within, and measure and condemn our own choices and decisions. Repentance is indeed a *Metanoia*, a change of attitude.

When we recognise in our fellows not merely the subjects of the same cosmic experience—if I may use such a phrase—but of the same judicial experience, we are proceeding on the lines of "common sense." Thus by extending our "shared will" so as to realise the divine will which moves behind the cosmic process, we have opened to us all the content of the religious life. The inner law which is thus disclosed is a reflection of the law which, according to *The Testaments of the XII. Patriarchs*,[2] was given to light every man. And this law is "the Christ within us," the interior King.

[2] L. xiv. 4.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

By the Rev. Cavendish Moxon, M.A.

Fellowship is the magic word to-day. In a democratic age it seems the natural way of personal salvation and social reform.

Catholics, under the influence of the fellowship ideal, are constantly insisting on obedience to the Church, the inherent powers of the hierarchy, the corporate life and social witness of Christians, the Body of Christ and the Fellowship of the Mystery.

Protestants are inspired by the belief in fellowship to make strenuous efforts to secure a re-union of all Christians in one fold. The numerous ecclesiastical fellowships for Church reform and the undenominational fellowships for moral, social, and political purposes, are a witness to men's growing faith in the power of co-operation to advance the cause of truth and goodness. Even liberal churchmen have so far forsaken their wonted method of individual influence as to form unions to advance their aims. Metaphysicians like Josiah Royce make the Beloved Community the object of Christian faith and the centre of Christian life. Sociologists like Durkheim find in the fellowship of the clan or group both the primitive and the present meaning of God. Unanimist poets like Jules Romains tell us that "the men who henceforth can draw the souls of groups to converge within themselves will give forth the coming dream." It is true that M. Romains has not yet found a group that is fully divine. "None," he declares, "has had a real consciousness." But he has a confident hope that the day will come when a group shall verily exist as a soul. "On that day," he believes, "there will be a new god upon earth."

There can be no doubt that belief in the religious value of fellowship is based upon deeply-rooted impulses of human nature, and that fellowship is one of the deep needs and one of the great values of human life. But all who long for fellowship ought to realise that the desire for fellowship demands the constant and critical control of developed humanity. The science of social psychology has shown why this conscious control of the impulse towards fellowship is necessary.

It is therefore the task of modern Churchmen to try to adjust their old faith in fellowship to the results of the new science.

First, we have to discover the effects of fellowship upon the individual and the value of fellowship for society.

Secondly, we must try to apply the results of this enquiry to the belief in fellowship as a necessary means of grace and power.

Social psychology recognises that the individuals who form a fellowship are different by nature and afterwards become uniform by social pressure. It is only when one is admitted to social and religious fellowships that one's idiosyncrasies of taste, desire, and activity are to some extent repressed or moulded by the requirements of the group. "One is not born like others."

Tarde declares, "one becomes so" by living in their society. A fellowship always involves imitation, and aims at the propagation of general ideas and collective values. A society or union has little interest in the particular and the individual. There is much imitation and social suggestion in the loosely knit society of a city or nation: the gregarious forces are more active in a religious or moral fellowship which is of one heart and mind: there is an almost overwhelming degree of social pressure upon the individual in closely packed crowds to become a prey to a common impulse. The study of crowd psychology is not without value for our subject, because in the crude and violent behaviour of the crowd we can clearly see the forces that are hidden behind the less obvious methods of the religious fellowship.

It is extremely probable that the mental sciences are destined to modify the beliefs of the twentieth century as much as the physical sciences modified the creed of the nineteenth. In particular the discoveries in the psychology of the unconscious and in social psychology will probably alter our belief in the place and power of fellowship in religion as much as the discoveries of physical law have altered our belief in providence and prayer.

The psycho-analysts have taught us to recognise the fundamental importance of the unconscious part of our psychical life. It appears that in the dark regions of our being, all our past experiences, our childish desires, and our animal impulses still exist. Normally they are under the strict censorship of the rational will. But whenever the will-power is relaxed by the superior suggestive power of a group or a group leader, the repressed desires and impulses may then rise from the unconscious depths, mingle with similar impulses in the fellowship and combine their forces to overwhelm the conscious individual wills. The psycho-analytic method has uncovered many infantile, savage, and bestial desires hidden in the souls of civilized and adult Christians. Dreams supply a harmless and healthy outlet for these primitive impulses which are suppressed in the life of wakeful activity. Unfortunately, however, the undesirable impulses may slip past the censor even when consciousness is fully awake. And the students of hypnotism and suggestion have pointed out the danger of these uprushes from the unconscious when they are allowed free expression without the control of the conscious will.

The sub-conscious self, Dr. Boris Sidis holds to be servile, cowardly, stupid, credulous, and irrational. When it is quite dissociated from the conscious self, it is shamelessly unscrupulous. It has acute senses, but often lacks sense. Hence the sub-conscious part of the soul is quite at home in a meeting, and longs for fellowship as a sheep longs for the flock.

Suggestion can best appeal to the sub-conscious when the attention is fixed upon visual symbols, gestures of eloquence, mental images, or the repetition of words. Suggestion, therefore, works most powerfully when a crowd is dense, or when a meeting is called for a definite purpose. Movement of body and distraction of mind both hinder the process. It is only when the sub-conscious is wholly free (namely, in complete hypnotic or somnambulistic states) that suggestion may be direct, and commands may be plainly made. So long as the conscious will retains some power of censorship over the

unconscious and the temporarily submerged part of the self, it is obvious that suggestions must be indirectly made in order to be successful. Otherwise they would merely strengthen the resistance of the will to a direct and undisguised attack upon its power. In any but the most ecstatically excited meeting, the successful speaker or preacher practises the indirect method of suggestion. By subtly concealing his will to suggest certain feelings, ideas, or acts, he eludes the censorship of the individual wills.

The group and the gathering of men, in proportion to their psychological unity, behave in a way that is foreign to the normal life of their members in isolation. The crowd is anonymous and therefore irresponsible. When thus relieved from the checks of prudence and fear, the members of a group are capable of performing heroic or criminal deeds that they dare not do without a collective stimulus. The fellowship may indeed behave better than its units apart, but it usually behaves worse than its members at their best. This is natural, since the unity of the group involves some suppression of the inventive originality and the inspired individuality of its members. M. Gustave le Bon is probably right in saying that the crowd (in a psychological sense) is always inferior in ideas to some, at least, of its members, though it may be superior in the intensity of its feeling and the power of asserting its will. M. Anatole France is true to history and psychology when he allows M. Gamelin, the tender-hearted and kind lover and friend, to be led by the suggestion of the French Revolutionaries to advocate cruel acts of merciless butchery.

In the primitive tribes of Australian aborigines the power and need of fellowship to foster a social and religious consciousness is most clearly seen. The normal life of nomadic and rustic men tends to destroy tribal unity. Hence their need of periodical gatherings of tribes and clans. At these festivals the normal methods of suggestion as practised in civilized fellowships are insufficient to rouse the dormant social sense of the members. The tribesmen must be roused to a frenzy of feeling and action in order to realise their social unity as the mystical body of their Totem. Without this strong social suggestion by means of fellowship, the tribal cohesion could not survive the long periods of separate family life.

From the lowly religion of these primitive men to the sacramental gatherings of our Christian worship, the fellowship has played an important part in preserving and propagating the faith which the inspired invidual has created. Religious groups and prophets are consequently in perpetual conflict. The group ever seeks to keep the gains mankind has already won: the inspired individeal alone can win new gains for the world. The inevitable tension between these two factors of history provides the material for endless tragedy and heroism. At the dawn of history the groups are strong and the individuals weak. The dominant social suggestion almost excludes individual initiative, variety, and progress. In the middle ages, when ecclesiasticism was dominant, men readily caught the contagion of the Crusades. Even children could not resist the impulse to make a pilgrimage. When Stephen the shepherd-boy of Cloyes in 1212 began a children's crusade, neither the edicts of authorities nor the threats of parents

could counter the strong suggestion. Some children who were forcibly detained at home pined away and died because they could not respond to the social pressure which they regarded as a call of conscience to follow their leader.

The Reformation of the 16th century had to reckon with the awakening of individuality caused by the Renaissance. Religious fellowships henceforth found it increasingly difficult to exercise absolute power over the judgment of individuals. The Protestant doctrine of the right of private judgment reduced the corporate suggestive power of the Catholic Church and limited the influence of ecclesiastical group leaders. It is no small compensation for Christian disunion that the Christian world has seen the passing of the appalling psychical epidemics of the middle ages—the outbreaks of asceticism, pilgrimages and crusades, dancing and flagellation, and hunting of witches and demons.

To-day the Modernist movement openly challenges the right of the Church to treat its members as mere organs of a sacred body. A great zeal for individual freedom and a perpetual fear of ecclesiolatry and mob-rule mark the Liberal Churchman. Indeed he can only be saved from an extreme reaction against corporate religion, if he is assured that fellowship ought to have a very strictly limited place and power in a vigorous religious life. But this is just the assurance that the science of social psychology can give. The lover of freedom may be sure that when the facts and precepts of this new science have been widely learnt, it will be impossible for any ecclesiastical or other fellowship to cause a general surrender to its will of the reason of its individual members.

At present the unbalanced group consciousness (especially at meetings) leads often to a fickle and impulsive behaviour with no sustained purpose and reasonable will. The crowd or meeting enormously increases the suggestibility of the members present. The unanimous show of hands in a packed meeting may but express the dominating will of a single leader. The power of fellowship is seen in the case of a young American atheist who was led by hostile curiosity to join the circle of an open-air revival meeting. Neither his armoury of doubts nor his force of will could resist the contagious excitement. The young scoffer soon began to beat his breast and to express the common religious emotion of the worshippers.

A curious result of group-feeling, unchecked by critical individual reason and will, is the collective vision or hallucination, which is occasionally recorded at times of religious excitement or collective strain. Indeed the contagion of a vision or audition is such that the evidence of five hundred witnesses is not necessarily stronger than the evidence of one.

By the law of self-preservation the fellowship is intolerant of differences, complexities, and novelties. Ideas must be simple and familiar in order to please the group: preferably they must be images or symbols of sentiments. Even in the French Revolution we see the tendency of the fellowship to become a cult with a goddess, with a Christian belief in Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and with leaders to increase men's faith, to sustain their hope, and to destroy the enemies of the people. The explicitly religious

fellowship exhibits the power of suggestion at its height. Dogmas and symbolic rites are at hand to fix the attention and to limit the thought. The prestige of a large and ancient society tends to overwhelm the individual will. The repetitions of the formulae in worship and the fatigue of ascetic exercises produce an extreme degree of suggestibility, especially in the feminine temperament.

Are we then to conclude that the fellowship is condemned by psychology as unworthy of a place in our religious life? Do the facts drive us to embrace a completely individualistic religion? Certainly not. For psychology finds in every religion a fellowship between men and sacred powers or spiritual beings. Religion, apart from fellowship with God, is found in Buddhism and in the religion of Comte and of Miss Jane Harrison. Religion without a human fellowship is a contradiction in terms. Fellowship is an essential means to religious power, enthusiasm, and comfort. But psychology has proved the practice of fellowship to be like alcohol in its narcotic effects upon the highest powers of conscious personality. It follows that fellowship is not to be indulged in too frequently lest it strangle initiative, and weaken resistence to the reactionary suggestions of the group and of the subconscious part of the self.

Children are ready to accept almost any suggestion, and they retain their infantile impressions throughout life. Children should therefore be given such fellowship with adults and other children as will develope individual self-expression and will-power. The aim of such fellowships should be to prevent a precocious sexual development and the excitement of strong emotional appeals to the senses and imagination. A frequent companionship of the sexes at work and play is equally desirable as a precaution against harmful sexual repression and perversion. The school is the chief formative fellowship of children. Yet the school, instead of educating children to resist the crushing domination of the fellowship, actually encourages individual subjection and dependence. As if the boy's mob feeling was not already strong enough, Mr. Rhodes made popularity with one's fellows a recommendation for scholarships. It is hardly conceivable that with the German products of *esprit de corps* before our eyes, we should still feel it a duty to drill all our children into conformity with the average member of their community.

With regard to the fellowship of adults. No rule can be made to apply to all alike, because all differ in sensitiveness to suggestion. The person who is naturally inclined to anarchy and independent research, is in danger of ignoring the religious values of fellowship. He does well to come down from his lonely height at times (like Nietzsche's Zarathustra) and sink himself in fellowship. He will soon prove his power to emerge and rise again in full possession of his soul. But fellowship is like a dangerous drug to the person who is naturally passive and obedient. The special inclination of women to frequent attendance at the meetings of religious fellowship is partly due to their desire to fall back into the protecting arms of Mother Church. But this very tendency of will makes a too frequent indulgence in the joys of fellowship a danger to their spiritual health.

From this brief review of the psychological facts about fellowship two conclusions follow.

(1) Fellowship is an essential part of religion, especially of the religion of the young and immature.

(2) Fellowship tends to inhibit the action of the will, to let loose primitive impulses, and to discourage intellectual activity. Fellowship therefore must not be given the dominant place in the religious life. It ought to be a means for the education of individuals, not the end to which they must be wholly subordinate. God comes first, and the individual's relation to Him; and the Church and the individual's relation to it comes second. The group has no higher ideas than its members. The collective consciousness is not a divine entity on a plane above the individual minds which compose it. Indeed the unity of the fellowship implies an artificial suppression of personal excellence to the average level of traditional thought, conventional feeling, and primitive impulse. No fellowship as a whole ever makes a discovery or receives a revelation. Even a union of liberal Churchmen can but guard the gains of the prophets, and spread a knowledge of the gifts they have received from God. "The progress of mankind is due to abnormal men and women." The abnormal therefore need our support against the desire of the fellowships to suppress them for the sake of the normal and simple believers.

Consequently we must be on our guard against any forms of religious fellowship which imply the dominance of the fellowship over its members. By this test we shall reject the claim of any group to be worshipped as God even though the group be as wide as M. Loisy's Humanity. Above all, we shall maintain the need for a healthy tension between the fellowship and its members as a factor in the growth of the Body of Christ. No Christian fellowship is yet a perfect embodiment of the Spirit of its life. But the Body of Christ is alive, and the growing points are in its Spirit-guided members. The creeds and rites and moral rules of the historical fellowship are like photographs of the body in earlier stages of its development.

Membership in the Catholic Church does not involve abject obedience. The practice of Christian fellowship is only justified in so far as it contributes fo the full development of the member of the Christian Church.

It is possible that not only fellowships within the Church, but even a part of the Church itself should cease to express a living faith and hope. There are to-day obvious signs that the Christian fellowships in our midst are declining both in numbers and influence. This decline may prove to be only the prelude to a new awakening of the existing communities or of a re-united Church. If, however, it is a sign of their permanent decline, it need be no shock to our faith. There is no need to grieve at the dissolution of fellowships which no longer serve the highest needs of men and women.

The Holy Spirit is bound to no one denomination as an embodiment of His life. He is indeed ever creating new fellowships to embody men's varying needs, and to realise their new ideals. Even though many social workers find their inspiration in societies which would once have been called secular, we ought to welcome their efforts as means to the realisation of the kingdom of righteousness, freedom, truth, and joy. The greatest peril to

Christianity is its passion for uniformity. Variety and schism, as George Tyrrell said, are sure signs of its life. One rigid organization which all Christians should be compelled to join would certainly lead to fixity and death. The clearest indication of the stirring of divine life in our world is man's creative will to break up and re-make fellowships for the enrichment of his personal life and the accomplishment of his religious, moral, and social ideals.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

By the Rev. R. B. Tollinton, D.D., Author of *Clement of Alexandria.*

It has been said that the lives of good men make the best sermons; at least we may allow that they supply the preacher with abundant material. Perhaps, too, there is a special fitness in the arrangement by which we, at this Conference, are invited to think each evening here in chapel of one or another of the religious personalities of the past. For we are to consider in our regular and more formal sessions the Psychology of Religious Experience. It will be our programme to examine, to analyse, to dissect, to differentiate, to compare, to break up the individual into his particular constituent elements and to investigate certain of these with special attention. But here, in our chapel services, as a complementary item of our scheme, we restore the different elements to something of their individual totality, viewing religious experience as it has taken shape in the concrete lives of particular persons, who, each under the special conditions of his own period, and each with his own particular qualities or limitations, have deserved their place in the Church's book of remembrance and may speak to us for our good across the intervening years.

This evening I am to invite your interest in Clement, the Alexandrian Father, whose activity as a Christian teacher runs from about the year 180 to the year perhaps 213 of our era. Among the greatest of the masters in religion we shall not indeed claim for Clement any place. He has exercised no such lasting influence on the course of Christian thought as either Athanasius or Augustine or his own great pupil, Origen. He has left behind him no finished system of theology. His aims were vague and sometimes outran his powers of execution. His learning was wide, but perhaps rather wide than deep. His hesitations and inconsistencies of teaching are obvious to any thoughtful reader. Moreover his personal experience of life led him, so far as we can learn, neither to the heights nor yet to the depths. As a writer he can be extremely tedious and discursive. We do not always know what he means and we sometimes wonder whether he knew himself. And yet, with these considerable limitations, he remains a man worth knowing, a teacher who by common consent has his special message and value for our own age. For he was a true pioneer. Many a truth, the significance and content of which were developed later, is found in germ in his writings.

With all that the educated people of his time knew and valued, he was thoroughly familiar. His especial worth for us lies, as it has been said, in his orientation. His face is set towards the things that are worthy of endeavour. For him, more than for many, nay, more than for most of the Church's teachers, the great things were great, the small things were small. He is large of heart and wide of view. He is sincere, frank, without malice, fair even in controversy. If he has not much passionate intensity, he has in large measure the gift of sweet reasonableness. Never was there a theologian more human. His was a glad and happy nature, and he thanked God for all good things. To the end, in spite of his learning, he retained something of the spirit of a child, nor did he find it impossible, as so many good people do, to combine a serious purpose and a sense of humour. To all whose vocation it is to teach, his work is of peculiar interest. As a master he loved his pupils, and he had the master's reward of being loved by them in the later years.

Let us pass rapidly over the story of Clement's uneventful life, and then from the very varied amalgam of his extant works select one or two points for emphasis and reflection.

He was born about the middle of the second century, probably in the quiet days of Antoninus Pius. There is some reason to think that his father was a Greek freedman, and still stronger evidence to show that his parents were heathen and in comfortable circumstances. He is more likely to have been born in Athens than in any other place; none certainly could have been more appropriate, and there, apparently, he found his way to Christianity and the Church's membership. He has left us no record of his conversion; probably it involved no violent breach with the past, but came rather as a natural stage in his spiritual development, a willing advance rather than an abrupt turning round. Then he travelled, making the tour from city to city, which was the conventional completion of a young man's education in the second, as with ourselves in the eighteenth, century. He went as far east as Antioch, as far west as Southern Italy, but he never went to Rome, and his journeys brought him at last to Alexandria, where he lived more than twenty years, and with which city ever since his name has rightly been associated. In Alexandria he met Pantaenus, a convert from Stoicism to Christianity, who conducted a school or class on philosophic Christian lines. Clement became his pupil, later, in all probability, his coadjutor, eventually his successor, as head of the school. Under Clement this school prospered amazingly, for he was the born teacher, and the conditions in Alexandria were abundantly favourable. The Roman prefects did not interfere, and the intellectual atmosphere of the place was so electic that any new teacher, whatever his message, was welcome to gather an audience if he could. Here, in his lecture room, Clement's life-work was done. Christian students and enquiring pagans came alike to hear him, and now and again even a Jew would be seen among the crowd. Origen was one of his pupils, and owed Clement a debt which, in his extant writings at any rate, he has failed strangely to acknowledge. Alexander, afterwards an Eastern Bishop, was

another, and of his gratitude we have a pleasing record. Nominally the instruction was usually based on Scripture, but the lecturer was discursive and little fettered by his text. How many of the younger men and women of his time came under Clement's influence to accept Christianity as the "true philosophy" we have no means of knowing. The number was, it seems, considerable enough to arouse comment, and perhaps even the staff of the Museum became jealous and apprehensive. However it exactly came about, Septimius Severus, the Emperor, forbade further conversions to Christianity. A wave of persecution swept over the eastern provinces, over Egypt especially, and Clement had to abandon his school and save himself by flight. 'When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.' So closed his career in Alexandria. The persecution subsided, but for some reason he did not return. Perhaps he was a marked man. Perhaps people who disliked his teaching found fault with his flight from danger. Very likely Demetrius, the Bishop, did not want him back. The independent teacher is very often a trouble to his authorities. So he never returned. We find him in Antioch, and we find him in Cappodocia. He stayed with old friends, and he seems to have been in his later years the pastor as much as the teacher. By 215 A.D. he had 'gone before,' slipping unnoticed out of life without other memorial or pomp of departure than such as existed in his pupils or his books. Of the latter some survive, three in particular, which form a sort of Triology, giving us successive stages in Christian education. I must not speak of them at length, but they should be named. First is the *Protrepticus*, a defence of Christianity intended especially to win the Greeks. Next is the *Paedagogus*, instructing the new convert in manners, behaviour, conduct, and incidentally giving us a curiously vivid picture of contemporary morals, ways and customs—how the women dressed, and how the vulgar rich employed their wealth. Lastly is the higher teaching, embedded in the medley of the *Miscellanies* or *Stromateis*, a term aptly translated "carpet bags," into which a writer could pack away a varied jumble of ideas and observations. To a modern reader much of the *Stromateis* is tedious enough, but Clement had his defence: 'If you dig through much earth,' he says, 'you will find a little gold.' And we may add that the gold is good. Besides these we have a curious and interesting discourse on the Young Ruler, arguing that it is not necessary for every rich man to sell all that he has in order to enter the Kingdom of God. The Lord's teaching is spiritualised, and such exegesis, then as now, is doubtless liable to the charge that it explains everything away.

And now, reminding ourselves of the subject upon which we have assembled to confer, what shall we say of Clement's religious experience? of what especial phase of piety is he a type? psychologically, what are the characteristics of his temperament? I would say this of him, that the distinctive and dominant feature of his personality and of his teaching is to be found in their singularly harmonious unity. His inner development seems to have been as even and peaceable as the course of his outward circumstances. No tragedy of the soul, no tremendous victory over self, no heroic surrender, no painful break with the past, brings in the note of

discord or division. Some men enter the kingdom God through much tribulation; some walk towards it without stress or haste, in all the serene confidence with which a child will approach its father's home. Of the latter Clement beyond doubt was one. William James would have described him as 'once-born,' and classed his religion as that of healthy mindedness. The world, Clement thought, was God's good order, and as such he accepted it, full of the sense of the divine goodness, and worrying little about his sins. Christianity for him meant illumination rather than the cross. He had a keen eye for affinities, and if discords existed, they did not greatly occupy him. So his life had its even tenor, and his teaching was meant to be a complete and harmonious scheme, of which, though he never accomplished it, he had at least his vision and his dream. He had no fellowship with the men who see life as a series of rifts and contrasts and catastrophes, so that he is alien in spirit from Aeschylus, Paul, Augustine, Luther, and if we seek his kinsmen they will be such as Plato and the Hebrew Wisdom writers, Erasmus, or in later days Goethe, and Wordsworth, and perhaps Martineau. This marked harmony, of experience first and consequently of teaching, had its special manifestations. Let us consider one or two.

There is no discord in Clement between reason and religion, between the intelligence and the spirit. Some of his interpreters have said that he so intellectualised Christianity that he secured harmony by the suppression of emotion and aspiration. But they interpret him amiss. In his appeal at the end of the *Protrepticus*, in his sketch of Gnostic character, in his sermon on the Young Ruler, he speaks from the heart as well as from the head, while in his frequent attempts to describe the soul's final stage of blessedness, there is an evident fusion of vision and emotion; which predominates it is hard to say. Perhaps we must not quite say of him that *pectus fecit theologum*, for after all he was a Greek, but at least we may assert that mind and soul in Clement accorded well and made one music. He belonged to Athens, and he belonged also to Jerusalem, and would quite have failed to understand Tertullian's indignant repudiation of the very possibility of loyalty to both. Reason alone never yet made a religion and never will, but when writers on mysticism say all the hard things they do about our poor intelligence, they might sometimes be reminded that Clement was a forerunner of all their company, and that for him at least the reason had its high offices, which were not incompatible with the spirit's better part. Whether he was a philosophical Christian or a Christian philosopher is hardly worth enquiry. Let it suffice to recognise the rare and admirable concord between these two elements in his nature.

The same quality of temperament comes out in another connection. It is one of the problems of our own time to effect any sort of adjustment between the different forces which are at work and which, each acting according to its own principles and character, so often threaten collision and disaster. How shall we reconcile democracy and empire, or eugenics and romance, or faith and criticism, or science and prayer, or in particular, how shall Christianity come to terms with the live realities of the modern age?

In the second century, as in the twentieth, many forces were at work, Christianity one among the rest, but with this difference, that it was a Christianity so young and so vigorous that, whatever its other shortcomings, it had at least the most astonishing faculty of assimilation. There was no important influence at work in the world of Clement's day which the religion of the Man of Galilee did not somehow capture, appropriate, and utilise. The process went on, of course, till the Empire was claimed for Christianity under Constantine, a century later on. As yet, when Clement lived, the new religion was free and comparatively unfettered. Its tradition was elastic, its doctrine, if not still fluid, at least as yet not crystallised or petrified; its organisation was but in process of formation, its burden of erudition as yet was light. In such happy freedom, why should the Church be forbidden to gather good things wherever she might find them? That process you see in Clement. Say if you will that the process was 'syncretistic,' say if you will that Clement was 'eclectic.' I question whether these may not be honourable rather than accusing terms. Consider what diverse resources he makes bold to claim for Christ. 'The Old Testament belongs to us,' he and his fellow Christians somewhat unkindly told the Jews. He was the first man of learning to consecrate scholarship, and he loves to quote Plato with Moses, Homer with the Psalmist, as joint evidence for some point of faith. It is the same with the Mysteries: the experiences of the initiated at Eleusis are claimed as akin to those of the Christian soul. All philosophy was, in Clement's view, a preparation for the fuller illumination of the incarnate Word. To borrow the world's rules of organisation was no business of Clement's. He left that to Rome and Carthage. But the process in principle was the same. This tendency, this spirit at its best—and you see it at its best in Clement—was just the gift for recognising affinity, just the glad power of appropriating all good things as the gifts of God for man. Doubtless the complementary process of testing, discrimination, selection must do its work; premature reconciliations are ever apt to react and cost us dear. But all who know Clement with any intimacy will feel how much he owed to this unifying temperament. It meant that his spiritual possessions were large and varied, that he could recognise the divine word in many diverse activities: πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως—at sundry times and in divers manners—was one of his most favourite texts.

Let us watch him display the same spirit in yet one other connection. No man was ever by nature less of a controversialist than Clement. I doubt if he had it in his nature to stand single handed like Athanasius *contra mundum;* happily, the times did not demand anything so heroic. Still the heretics were there, the Gnostics had great influence, and the Church had to meet them or leave them in possession. So Clement was obliged to deal with Gnostic books and Gnostic teachers, and even where there is no explicit allusion, their doctrines were evidently often in his mind. Deliberately he believes that in the main the Church was right and the Gnostics wrong. But out of this conviction, which was never so far as we know in question, comes no extragavant hostility, no root and branch intolerance, nothing so noisy as Tertullian's invective, nothing so partisan as even the antagonism

of the gentle Irenaeus. He can learn from those with whom he differs. For how many theologians can we make that claim? It is not even a case of *fas est et ab hoste doceri;* Valentinus and Heracleon were in no sense his enemies. Here too he will appropriate what he can, gathering, in his own description of his work, like the bee, his honey from various flowers. He calls his ideal Christian the true Gnostic. He examines Gnostic books with deliberate honesty and care. Particularly in the exegesis of Scripture he learns from these suspected teachers. He knows where he differs, and he knows with whom he will have no sort of dealing, but there is no sweeping condemnation of a class, no delight in attributing one man's error to all his associates. He believes in no monopoly of truth;—many streams flow into the great river,—and where he finds any fragment of it, is more concerned with its intrinsic verity than with the source or authority from which it comes. So long as we know in part, so long as we view the same verities from different points of view, controversy in theology may remain inevitable. It were well if we could more often conduct our discussions in Clement's temper. Even the champion of ecclesiastical liberalism might learn something from his fairness, which is never flabbiness, from his quick recognition of truth in an opponent's case, albeit he is quite convinced that, in the main issue, the opponent must be faced and overcome.

One might point out other ways in which the Alexandrine father manifests the same characteristics. His theory of punishment, Platonic rather than scriptural, views it as an education, always a part of God's good scheme, never vindictive retribution, or even the exaction of a debt. His appreciation of the place and service of women in the Church carries him, not indeed all the way, but far beyond St. Paul. He is something of the spiritual aristocrat, believing that, if many be saved, still it is the few who know, yet he will champion again and again the cause of the simple believer, whom, to say the truth, his advanced teaching had sometimes scandalised.

His favourite doctrine is that of the Divine Word, the Logos, ceaselessly active in nature's order and in the onward movement of the life of man. "Clement's idea of the Saviour," said Professor Bigg in his Bampton Lectures (p. 72), "is larger and nobler—may we say less conventional?—than that of any other doctor of the Church."

For such qualities we do well to remember him. With few of the ancients have modern churchmen more affinity. It seems a far journey from our world, torn and sundered in these days of war, to the unity, harmony, and catholic good will, which are the cherished principles of Clement's mind and soul. All the more, perhaps, because of the difficulty of making them our own in these troubled times, shall we value such words as these of the one quotation with which I close. He is writing on 'Blessed are the peacemakers,' and he says:—

> "That would be the perfection of peacemaking which should preserve our peace undisturbed at any accident, and esteem the world as a holy and beautiful scheme, and rest in the understanding of things divine and human, whereby we may regard the contrarieties in the world's order as the admirable harmony of creation."

BLAISE PASCAL (1623-1662).

By the Rev. Alfred Fawkes, M.A., Author of *Studies in Modernism.*

"From morning until evening the time changeth; and all things are speedy before the Lord."—*Ecclesiasticus xviii.* 26.

(1) More than thirty years ago a notable series of biographical and historical sermons was preached in Balliol College Chapel by one who more than any other man of his generation—or perhaps of our own—taught Oxford to think. One of them was on Pascal. The portrait of the "philosopher-saint" was drawn by a preacher who was not without the qualities which we associate with either character. He was in many respects more like a good man than a clergyman. Not, of course, that the two classes are exclusive the one of the other: but he comprehended (in the words of the Apostle) "what is the breadth" both of Divine and of human things. He moved among ideas with a facility seldom found in Englishmen: he was the greatest educator of his generation; and, though canonization is not a function of the Reformed Churches—not so much because they do not produce saints as because they recognize the limitations of human knowledge—I have heard him described by a devout Roman Catholic as "the best man he ever knew." The discourse was lit up by flashes of insight which we should now call Impressionist—for there were Impressionists before Impressionism: it reminded us of "the far-off echo of Vanity Fair to be found everywhere in Pascal's writings;" that he was "a saint and a sceptic in one, or rather that he may be said to have made scepticism the foundation of his religion;" that he had "the keenest love of truth (not generally deemed the virtue of a saint)."[1]

Let us consider him to-day as a milestone in history. For the more it appears to us that "he was a great man, much above the measure of anyone now living," the more it comes home to us that he was a man of his generation; and that this generation is not ours. That this is so is no disparagement to his greatness. Not to be of its generation is the tragedy, not the prerogative, of genius; they cannot serve their age who are born prematurely and "out of due time." To be before our van, or behind our rear, is equally to be a straggler; though the latter form of straggling is the commoner, and that which most concerns ourselves. For the world moves more quickly than we think. As its waters touch us the stream passes: "from morning until evening the time changeth; and all things are speedy before the Lord."

(2) Though his most enduring work was done on the field of exact science—in physics and in mathematics—it is as a thinker and a man of letters that he is best known to us. More than any one man, he was the creator of French prose, *i.e.*, of a vehicle of thought which is to the modern world what Greek prose was to the ancient: he is the most lucid and arresting of writers; the *Provincial Letters* and, fragmentary as they are, the *Thoughts* rank among the classics of all time.

[1] Jowett, *Sermons Biographical and Miscellaneous*, v.

(3) We should not now go back to the latter work for apologetic, in the technical sense of the word; here it is of its generation: and its greatness lies on the larger field of religion as such, not on that of any particular religion or form of religion; in its appeal to that mystical sense of mankind which underlies the religious consciousness, and is as living in the great non-Christian religions of the East as in Christianity. Here Pascal stands almost, if not quite, alone. He looks at the vastness of the heavens; "The eternal silence of these infinite spaces terrifies me," he exclaims: he looks at the wide expanse of earth; "How many kingdoms know us not!": he considers the changes and chances of life; "It is a horrible thing to feel all that we possess slipping away from us:" he considers the end; "The last act is piercing, however happy the rest of the play is: for at the last a little earth is thrown upon us, and this is the end for ever:" yet is not this the spirit of tragedy, not of Christ? Or he contrasts the present, or passing, with the ideal, or permanent, world: "The rivers of Babylon rush and fall and hurry us away with them. O Holy Sion, where all stands fast, and passeth not away!" His sense of the infinities among which we move is overwhelming:—

> "I look on all sides, and I see only darkness everywhere: Nature presents nothing to me which is not matter of doubt and concern."

Temperamentally opposite as Pope and Pascal were—and no two men could be more so—we may recall the fine lines in the Essay on Man.

> "Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
> A being darkly wise and rudely great;
> With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
> With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
> He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
> In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast:
> In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
> Born but to die, and reasoning but to err:
> Created half to rise and half to fall;
> Great Lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
> Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled,
> The glory, jest, and riddle of the world."[2]

(4) Believer as he was, his utterances with regard to belief are two-edged:—

> "Pyrrhonism, *e.g.*, he says, "is the truth. For, after all, before Christ men knew neither where they stood, nor whether they were great or small. Those who argued on either side knew nothing about it, and did but guess at random."

Yet is not to be of this mind to part company with that philosophy which was to the Gentile world what the Law was to the Jewish, "our tutor to bring us unto Christ"? While the famous "Wager," by which he commends Faith—"if you win, you win everything; if you lose, you lose nothing"—is neither religious nor ethical; a modern moralist characterizes it as "distinctly mean."[3] And his advice to unbelievers—"Do what others in

[2] Epistle ii. [3] *Revaluations*. A. W. Benn, p. 152.

your position have done: act *as if* you believed; take holy water, attend mass and the like. The effect will be to deaden your critical faculty, and stupefy you into belief" (*abêtir* is the word used)—is frankly repulsive. It is not unknown to-day. But it is an abomination, find it where we will. "Doth God," asks the prophet in sombre irony, "need your lie?"

On the other hand, "While speaking after the manner of our fellows, we should have a thought in the background, and judge everything by that;" and, "A man should be three things—a mathematician, a sceptic, and a follower of Christ:" these are equivocal sayings, and might have come from Montaigne.

(5) To the philosopher it will seem that Pascal's radical fallacy was his disbelief in Reason. In this we may compare him to an illustrious English divine—who, appropriately, died a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church—Cardinal Newman, with whom he had much in common, and to those who "give place by subjection" to his great name. Take, *e.g.*, such sayings as these: "All our reasoning reduces itself to yielding to feeling;" "Reason and the senses deceive each other in turn;" "There is nothing so conformable to Reason as the disavowal of Reason;" "How ludicrous is Reason, blown with a breath in every direction!" "Men are so necessarily mad, that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness." Well, the Church of Reason, were there such a society,—I fear we are still far from it—would not possess an *Index Expurgatorius*; but, if it did, such propositions would be rightly placed upon it. For, find them where we will, they are pure scepticism; and, though there are pious sceptics, scepticism, whether pious or impious, is a disease, and a "lie in the soul." Do not let us destroy that by which we live. "Reason," says a great Cambridge teacher, "is the Divine Governor of man; it is the very Voice of God."[4] Here is a happier climate: *soles melius nitent*. And the opposite of Scepticism is Rationalism. We need not be ashamed of being Rationalists with the author of the Fourth Gospel. "That," he said—speaking of the Logos (the Word, or Reason, which "was in the beginning with God," but which also "was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us")—"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

(6) The *Provincial Letters* are a literary masterpiece. Pascal made his opponents appear ridiculous. They were so. Europe went into uncontrollable laughter over the "sufficient" grace which was "insufficient;" over the quibbling of Escobar, who added a new word to the French language—*escobarderie* means shuffling, or equivocation; over the pedantic paradoxes of Diana and Tamburini and Emanuel Sa. The outlandish names of these writers add to the sense of the grotesque produced by their absurdities. "But (I asked in alarm), are all these extraordinary people Christians?" was the question provoked by the list of their unpronounceable patronymics—Villalobos, Caramuel, Squillanti, Filiucci, Lobkowitz. And their principles were as novel as their names. According to the *Somme des Péchés* of Bauny, a work which went through many editions both in French and in Latin, it

[4] Benjamin Whichote. *Aphorisms*, lxxvi.

was almost impossible to commit a perfect sin. One or other of the conditions was sure to be wanting: "Behold the Lamb of God"—the words were applied to the author—"who taketh away the sins of the world!"

But the reasoning which gave substance to their criticism of the Casuists would, had they been consistent, have taken Pascal and the Jansenists very much further than they were prepared to go. "This is what the theologians call Prevenient Grace," said a well-known Eton tutor, commenting to his pupils on "whom He fore-ordained, them He also called;"[5] "but (he added wisely) the less we know of these things the better." For how much of what is known as dogmatic theology is rhetoric, taken for fact, and stretched on a Procrustes' bed of Logic! Where this is so, its syllogisms are *in vacuo*; its conclusions a house of cards built on sand. "Proximate" and "Remote" Power; "Sufficient" and "Efficacious," "Prevenient" and "Consequent," "Operative" and "Co-operative" Grace:—define them as we will, have these expressions any real meaning? do they not multiply words without increasing sense? It was an acute saying of Pascal that "people in general are content with phrases, few caring to go below names to things." But this line of thought would have carried him back beyond the Council of Trent, and St. Thomas, and St. Augustine, and, if not beyond St. Paul, certainly beyond his first interpreters. For the process of professionalizing religion began early: it is not of Jewish theologians only that it must be said that they leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the traditions of men. And what is lacking in sense in these discussions is made up in passion. "These are the disputes not of theology, but of theologians:" and theologians are a *genus irritabile*; temper is "the badge of all their tribe."

> "Lo! how they stretch their gloomy wings around,
> And lash with furious strokes the trembling ground!
> They pray, they fight, they murder, and they weep,—
> Wolves in ferocity, in manners sheep;
> Saints in design, in execution men;
> Peace in their looks, but vengeance on their pen."[6]

(7) With all his austerity, Pascal's spirit was one of independence. He had the lay mind: if we see in him something of Calvin, we see in him also something of Voltaire. The fable of Bourg Fontaine was a Jesuit slander; but it was a true instinct which led the official Church to see in Jansenism a herald of revolt. It may be said of Pascal, as of Knox, that "he never feared the face of man." In an age of authority, truth meant more to him than authority; in an age of religious and civil absolutism, he put conscience before Pope and King. The cerements of the past hung about him, but he was a modern; like Lazarus, he had "come forth." His criticism of Casuistry, unforgettable as it is, is open to criticism. Casuistry, as such, labours under an interior contradiction. The medium of speech is inadequate to the things of spirit; the springs of action escape consciousness and cannot be weighed in human scales. But, approximate as its conclusions are, casuistry is inseparable from law, to which it stands as interpretation;

[5] *Romans*, viii. 30. [6] Crabbe. The Library.

and, in particular, from the system of Sacramental Confession. Were it not for the protection which, with its corollary Probabilism, it affords, the confessor could impose his personal opinions on the penitent, who, under the threat of the refusal of absolution, would be helpless. The argument against Casuistry is conclusive. But you cannot stop short here: it is conclusive also against the so-called Sacrament of Penance. And this is a lesser evil with Casuistry than without it: if people must practise Confession, in this sense of the word—a practice which history and experience shew to be in general useless for any moral purpose, and for many reasons undesirable—they had better go to the Jesuits than to Port Royal. Port Royal served God; but it served Him "with trembling." This was its last word; and it was a word of horror: the Jesuits, with all their laxities, were "the better directors of souls."[7] The brilliancy of Pascal's advocacy, and the moral grandeur of Port Royal must not lead us to forget that its harsh and gloomy doctrines belong to that core of darkness in human nature on which the advance of religion and of civilization acts as a solvent. "The Father Himself loveth you:" this is the charm that dissipates these sombre questionings; to possess it is to have passed beyond them into light.

The Augustinianism which underlies Jansenism is a philosophical speculation mistranslated into a theological formula; if inevitable as a background, it is impossible as a working theory of life. For goodness is the primary attribute of Divinity. Men will not worship a God whose morality is below their own; while conscience and common sense brush away the scholastic figment of a God in whom goodness means a quality incommensurable with that known to us as goodness. A philosophy which evades the real, *i.e.*, the rational, issues of philosophy—whether we find it naked and unashamed, as in Mansel, or disguised, as in the Pragmatists—is a mutilated philosophy; it has been "made an eunuch by men." Such mutilations are not "for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake." In Mill's famous outburst against this pseudo-Theism the voice of the Theism innate in mankind speaks:—

> "I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply the term good to my fellow creatures. And, if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go."

(8) The controversies upon which we have touched are now ancient history; they survive in books, not in the world of the actual—for "all things are speedy before the Lord." But an increasing stream of purpose runs through them; the mind of man, the eternal counsel of God declared in, and to, and through humanity—these "go from strength to strength." The heroism of Port Royal is a thing never to be forgotten; the invincible courage of Pascal—*atrox animus Catonis*—triumphed over disease, defeat, and (this was perhaps its greatest victory) over the lesser virtues of his opponents; virtues which, as they then presented themselves, were identified (such is the mixture ot human things) with a system doomed to a rapid decay—in the words of a living writer, *frappé de caducité*—but which, under new forms, and in other combinations, are permanent assets of mankind.

[7] Joubert.

Does it seem that we can do little to advance this Divine Process? that

"We, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must perish?"

It is not so; and "it fortifies our soul" to know it: *θεοῦ γάρ ἔσμεν συνεργοί:* we are fellow labourers with God. Meanwhile,

"Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
And if, as towards the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower
We feel that we are greater than we know."

THOMAS CARLYLE.[1]

By Nowell Smith, M.A., Headmaster of Sherborne School.

I find by listening to my friends and acquaintances, and also from allusions in books and newspapers, that there is already a Carlyle myth, due to the growth of second-hand and partial knowledge of him—or rather two myths. On the one hand, since the war, he is frequently regarded as another Nietzsche (also a largely mythical figure) a worshipper of brute force and Prussian Juggernaut efficiency. On the other, there is the older view of him as a prophet, and not merely a prophet of morality, but a mystical prophet, and even a Christian prophet, though of course not an orthodox Churchman. Now each of these incompatible myths is far too simple.

Carlyle was primarily an artist, and that very complex, self-critical, highly-strung kind of artist, a man of letters.

Our general impression of the man is of a rugged original character, prophetic, oracular, iconoclastic, minatory, of a torrential, yet sardonic, eloquence, who, in spite of his reverence for Goethe, would certainly have claimed—and we could not dispute the claim—to be *nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri*; owning allegiance to no master or school of thought.

Yet when it comes to the question of treating him as a religious type, the difficulty lies not, of course, in his originality or independence, but in the connotation to be given to the word "religion."

That Carlyle was a religious man it would be a paradox to deny. That he wrote few pages, whether for publication or in his private letters or journals, in which his pre-occupation with religious ideas does not plainly appear, is equally demonstrable. But the more I read him, the more difficult I find it to put into any intelligible form what his religion was, and I am finally landed in the conclusion that the noun corresponding to the sense in which he was religious is not "religion," but his own word—"religiosity"[2]—or if that word has

[1] Some introductory remarks of the address as delivered are here omitted, and a few sentences substituted.

acquired any connotation of cant, I will substitute "religiousness," awkward though it be to pronounce. We may talk, of course, of any code or principle by which a man directs his conduct as his religion, and may justify such a use of the term by its etymology. Thus patriotism may be one man's religion, duty another's, the support or advancement of his family that of a third, pure egotism of a fourth, and so on. In this sense, work was Carlyle's religion or a very large part of it; witness hundreds of evidences in his letters and elsewhere, besides the noble statement in *Past and Present*. But whatever the origin of the word, we are consciously using metaphor when we employ it now in this sort of sense; in ordinary use it implies some positive and more or less definite belief in a divine or supernatural power or powers, upon which we in some way depend, and with which we can get into some sort of communication for help and guidance or protection. That Carlyle recognised the value of religion in this sense, that he aspired to it and at times embraced it, nobody who reads either *Sartor* or *Heroes* or *Characteristics* or the essay on *Novalis* or the letters or journals will deny: but that he ever acquired it for his own and held it consciously as the master-light of all his seeing, it seems to me equally impossible to assert,—and still more, that he ever permanently enjoyed that peace which passeth understanding which is surely the common mark of those, otherwise so various, whom we naturally speak of as "religious types."

Probably some of you have already been wondering whether I have forgotten all those magnificent and (you may say) grandly religious outbursts of Carlyle about "the azure starry heavens," about the finite bodying forth the infinite; about nature the garment of God; about the everlasting No and the everlasting Yea; "Love not pleasure, love God. This is the everlasting Yea, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him" (*Sartor*, p. 133). I should consult my own leisure and your pleasure, and possibly your profit too, if I strung together a few out of the innumerable "purple patches" which stimulate our imaginations, stir the blood, and in a word "make us feel good." I will at least give you one such passage, the concluding paragraph of that famous *Edinburgh Review* article called "Characteristics," which anticipates so much of Carlyle's teaching both in *Sartor* and elsewhere.

> "He that has an eye and a heart can even now say: why should I falter? Light has come into the world; to such as love Light, so as Light must be loved, with a boundless, all-doing, all-enduring love. For the rest, let that vain struggle to read the mystery of the Infinite cease to harass us. It is a mystery which, through all ages, we shall only read here a line of, there another line of. Do we not already know that the name of the Infinite is Good, is God? Here on Earth we are as Soldiers, fighting in a foreign land; that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no need to understand it; seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like Soldiers, with submission, with courage, with a heroic joy. 'Whatso-

[2] I cannot find the passage where I lately read this word in Carlyle, though I remember reading it used in this sense merely of a religious temper or tendency. N.E.D. quotes Wyclif's Bible, Caxton's Golden Legend, James Martineau (1846) in this sense: its earliest quotation for the sense "affected or excessive religiousness" is 1799, followed by examples from Southey and John Morley.

ever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' Behind us, behind each one of us, lie Six Thousand Years of human effort, human conquest; before us is the boundless Time, with its as yet uncreated and unconquered Continents and Eldorados, which we, even we, have to conquer, to create; and from the bosom of Eternity there shine for us celestial guiding stars.

'My inheritance how wide and fair!
Time is my fair seed-field, of Time I'm heir.'"

Now if this, which is typical Carlyle, were the only typical Carlyle, all would be well. He would easily pass muster as a mystic, whether of a theistic or a pantheistic variety. And a mystic he has frequently been called, and indeed at times half-claimed to be. Some of you will remember chapter x. of *Sartor*, entitled "Pure Reason":—

"To the eye of vulgar Logic," says he, "what is man? An omnivorous Biped that wears Breeches. To the eye of Pure Reason what is he? a Soul, a Spirit, and divine Apparition. Round his mysterious *Me*, there lies under all those wool-rags, a Garment of Flesh (or of Senses), contextured in the Loom of Heaven; whereby he is revealed to his like, and dwells with them in *Union* and *Division*; and sees and fashions for himself a Universe, with azure Starry Spaces, and long Thousands of Years. Deep-hidden is he under that strange Garment; amid Sounds and Colours and Forms, as it were, swathed in, and inextricably overshrouded: yet it is sky-woven, and worthy of a God. Stands he not thereby in the centre of Immensities, in the conflux of Eternities? He feels; power has been given him to Know, to Believe; nay, does not the spirit of Love, free in its celestial primeval, brightness, even here, though but for moments, look through? Well said Saint Chrysostom, with his lips of gold, 'the true *Shekinah* is Man:" where else is the *God's-Presence* manifested, not to our eyes only, but to our hearts, as in our fellow man?

"In such passages, unhappily too rare, the high Platonic Mysticism of our Author, which is perhaps the fundamental element of his nature, bursts forth, as it were, in full flood; and, through all the vapours and tarnish of what is often so perverse, so mean in his exterior and environment, we seem to look into a whole inward Sea of Light and Love;—though, alas, the grim coppery clouds soon roll together again, and hide it from view.

"Such tendency to Mysticism is everywhere traceable in this man; and indeed, to attentive readers, must have been long ago apparent. Nothing that he sees but has more than a common meaning, but has two meanings: thus, if in the highest Imperial Sceptre and Charlemagne-mantle, as well as in the poorest Ox-goad and Gipsy-Blanket, he finds Prose, Decay, Contemptibility; there is in each sort Poetry also, and a reverent Worth. For Matter, were it never so despicable, is Spirit, the manifestation of Spirit; were it never so honourable, can it be more? The thing Visible, nay, the thing Imagined, the thing in any way conceived as Visible, what is it but a Garment, a Clothing of the higher, celestial Invisible, 'unimaginable, formless, dark with excess of light?'"

Truly, "such tendency to Mysticism is everywhere traceable in this man." And yet even in these passages, and still more in his writings and character

viewed as as whole, we cannot help feeling that, if mysticism was "perhaps the fundamental element of his nature," he exhibits a case of arrested development. If he was a mystic, he was a "stickit" mystic or a mystic *manqué*. Dr. Richard Garnett indeed, in his lively and stimulating *Life*, will have no such verdict.

> "On the highest of all subjects Carlyle is as explicit as could possibly be desired. Speaking to his academical subjects, the young students at Edinburgh University, to whom he stood for the moment in the relation of a Shepherd and Bishop of souls, he said in carefully chosen words—'I believe you will find in all histories that that [religion] has been at the head and foundation of them all, and that no nation that did not contemplate this wonderful Universe with an awe-stricken and reverential feeling that there was a great unknown, omnipotent, and all-wise and all-virtuous Being, superintending all men in it and all interests in it—no nation ever came to very much, nor did any man either, who forgot that.'"

So far Carlyle: Dr. Garnett adds:—

> "They who add aught to or diminish aught from this simple faith cannot claim Carlyle as theirs."

He goes on to speak of Carlyle's "Conception of Deity, alternately Pantheistic or Theistic, as either view may seem for the moment more in harmony with the reverence which it is his constant purpose to express." But surely it is an abuse of language to call this alternately pantheistic and theistic reverence for "a great unknown, omnipotent, and all-wise and all-virtuous Being," a "simple faith," or indeed an "explicit" religion at all. Wonder or awe may be the origin of religion; but the faith even of a mystic must have some more positive and self-consistent content than can be found in Carlyle's innumerable and often magnificent outbursts of admiration of the great pageants of Nature and the great emotions and efforts of man.

Religiosity—yes! Mysticism—yes, of a Kantian, Fichtean, metaphysical kind. Religion, even, in some senses of the word—indeed, as we shall see in a moment, in *the* sense of that rather arbitrary framer of definitions, Matthew Arnold. But not religious mysticism nor mystical religion in the ordinary acceptation of those terms.

And why? Because first and last Carlyle was before all things, a critic, a sceptic. In spite of and even through all his denunciations of scepticism, profound unresting tides of doubt sway to and fro. From time to time he claims to have achieved the serenity of a faith, which is however very rarely distinguishable from fatalism,—just as he identified "the soul of Islam" with "the soul of Christianity." But in the whole tone of his writings, in their incessant protestations, dogmatisms, railings upon almost every class, institution, doctrine, even individual, with whom or which he comes in contact, except the heroes and rascals whom he selected to deify, in the contempt for mankind in the mass, which gradually demoralised his nobler hero-worship into idolatry of the drill-sergeant, and—must we not add, with no petty thought either of disapprobation or of patronage, but in the simple desire to see things as they are?—in the extreme and never subdued irritability and self-consciousness of his temperament,—surely in all this there is little of that victory or of that joy and peace in believing which are the only indisputable marks of a positive faith,

whether the possessor of it be of the simpler once-born or of the deeper twice-born hope. Carlyle's encounter with the Everlasting No in the *Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer* has its analogies, as he—the supreme master of analogies—could not help feeling, with conversions of St. Pauls and Augustines, revelations to Mahomet, and the like. And right manfully he continued even to defy the Devil of Despair and Doubt: but there came no such Everlasting Yea to him as rings out in St. Paul's "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," or as breathed in St. Augustine's *Inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te.* Carlyle's Everlasting Yea is "Love not pleasure: love God," and the whole emphasis of his teaching with its Cameronian Calvinistic roots is laid upon the negative arm of the commandment.

Perhaps one of the most significant facts about Carlyle's writings from the religious point of view is the practically total absence from them of any idea of God as Love. He made a God of the Absolute, but allowed his God only the moral range, as it were, of the Hebrew Jehovah. He was too honest to feign anything. He recognised God as Power, he recognised the imperative of Duty. Though I do not remember his referring to it, he might well have adopted as the motto of his religiosity the famous "confession" of Kant, "Two things ever move me to awe, the starry heavens above, and the moral law within." But if he deprecates, or rather, as usual, denounces, the "vain interminable controversy" about the origin of evil, one cannot help feeling throughout that it is just because this problem is always keeping raw and quivering his intensely sensitive sympathetic nature. His deification of Might, his Fredericks and his Francias and Governor Eyres, his brutal language about niggers and prison-reformers, and so forth,—all this is the reaction of his super-sensitiveness, his kicking against the pricks of "all this unintelligible world." Nietzsche's "blonde beast" theory was the fruit of an analogous super-sensitiveness only at several degrees further from an emotional equilibrium. Carlyle never went mad; but in some of his favourite heroes, his Cromwell, his Luther, his Samuel Johnson, he recognised, as we cannot fail to recognise, a vein of melancholy akin to his own. He never found the sovereign remedy which faith in a loving and therefore personal God has afforded to so many struggling souls. His Fichte and Goethe and his gospel of force and anti-shams and anti-gigmanity were no more cures for his spiritual woes than his medicines and diets and horse exercise could cure his dyspepsia. Just as his constitution proved tough enough to carry his dyspepsia to the good old age of 85, so

> "Neither listlessness nor mad endeavour
> Nor man nor boy
> Nor all that is at enmity with joy,"

could shatter the rock-based hereditary stern morality of this Annandale peasant, howsoever they tortured him for his gifts of sensibility, imagination, rhetoric.

"Morality tinged with emotion"—that seems altogether too faint and elegant a religion for Thomas Carlyle, as, like his Mankind, he "flashes stormfully across the astonished earth, then plunges again into the flame." But morality *electrified* or *lightning borne* by emotion is his religion as near as I can phrase it. In a journal of his of the year 1830 I find this, which taken in connexion with his thought as a whole implies more than it says:—"What is Jesus Christ's

significance? It is *altogether moral.*" Well, perhaps I did wrong to quarrel with the inclusion of Thomas Carlyle in a list of types of religion. For, genius as he was, he was yet typical of the prevailing attitude of the modern educated mind —a high and sensitive morality fighting the materialism and cynicism of the world with a vague agnostic transcendentalism. He made a gallant fight against foes without and foes within. He has been to many of us a real prophet of Duty, Sincerity, Work, and Reverence. He was the greatest man of letters of the Nineteenth Century, one of the greatest imaginative and descriptive prose-writers of all the centuries. As a thinker and teacher his effect was purgative rather than constructive. In the early stages of the struggle between the new Science and the old Theology, he was equally repelled by what seemed to him the degrading materialism of the one side, and the feeble make-belief of the other. Though so sensitive and tender-hearted in personal relationships, he inherited a stern and narrow view of God and man: and although intellectually he cut the bonds of Calvinist dogma, his ethical instincts, reinforced no doubt by life-long dyspepsia, kept him in bondage to the law of prohibitions. His often expressed and of course genuine admiration for the teaching of Jesus was strangely compatible with blindness to the very centre and source of that teaching, the absolute trust in the loving Fatherhood of God. His God was an abstraction, a metaphysical inference, or, in so far as he was personified, he was the personification of power and of retributive justice. Of this God Carlyle was an eloquent, if excessively reiterative, prophet. He could not be an evangelist. But it is a gospel that men need and demand. It may do us good to be chastised now and then, even with scorpions; but in the end we shall be led further than we shall ever be driven.

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

By the Rev. Hubert Handley, M.A., Author of *The Fatal Opulence of Bishops.*

Wordsworth, aged 20, an undergraduate of Cambridge, walked with a friend through the Alps. It was in the year 1790. The fierce beginnings of revolt in France; the bursting there of the bands of iniquity, of ancient, griping wrong—young Wordsworth knew it and rejoiced.

> "Honour to the patriot's zeal!
> Glory and hope to new-born Liberty!
> Hail to the mighty projects of the time!
> . . . . . Ye purging fires,
> Up to the loftiest towers of Pride ascend,
> Fanned by the breath of angry Providence."

Yet, when in his mountain-tour he reached the Convent of Chartreuse, Wordsworth saw that here, too, was something human, valid, desired; that the labor of the mystic to plumb the unplumbed depths, to suit the human spirit to

the Eternal, to lodge the human spirit in its proper, heavenly tenement—Wordsworth saw that this did not cross the revolutionary dream of social justice, but upheld it, surrounded it, permeated it, gave to it height, depth, dignity, consecration.

> "Spare
> These courts of mystery . . .
> . . . . . for the sake
> Of conquest over sense, hourly achieved
> Through faith and meditative reason . . .
> Calmly triumphant . . . . . .
> Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
> Is with infinitude, and only there.

Turn now to our own perplexed and anxious world. Service of man, service of God—the old double call sounds out aloud around us. *On the one side*, ringing in our ears, borne on the wind, echoing from the hills, is "social reconstruction."

> "Give to the children of men earth's common joys; do not pen these blessings up within the walls of opulence; scatter them broadcast among the pale, tired multitude for wide-spread healing and hope. Pour, also, the boons of civilization—science, art, literature, culture—pour these out upon the parched and thirsty understanding of the mob."

Who has not heard that call? Out of the very furnace of war, while the very trumpets of doom reverberate through the nations, this cry still reaches us:

> "Mend the lot of the people; come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe life into the dry bones of human brotherhood."

Yes! we all bow our heads to the call for "social reconstruction." *On the other side*, not so noticeable, but more deep; elemental, awful, pathetic, sustained; the cry that never fully could break out, half-uttered, half-dumb, too grand for formulation, yet again and again, from one generation to another, bursting the envelope of silence, struggling for vent, stammering out intimations of its need:

> "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God."

The Monastery of *La Grande Chartreuse* was to Wordsworth on his Alpine tour the representative of this religious cry: to us this morning the representative of this religious cry is Thomas à Kempis.

Zwolle, in eastern Holland, is a beautiful little town. If you visited it, you might be reminded of Stratford-on-Avon or, though not on a hill, of Assisi. The inhabitants are civil, pleasant with an old-world courtesy which is found rather in the by-ways of life. You drive a mile or two out to the site of the ruined, indeed vanished, Convent of Mount St. Agnes. Here for seventy-two years Thomas lived. Here in 1471, aged 91, and sub-prior, he died. Here, it is believed, he wrote the *Imitation*. The only edifice on the spot remaining is a rude shed, on the inner walls of which hangs the well-known print of Thomas reproduced as frontispiece in Mr. Kettlewell's biography. A few yards away from the shed is the reputed site of the grave. To pace up and down beside that little, inconspicuous, neglected mound of earth, and to read there the first chapter of Thomas's immortal tract is, believe me, a moving experience.

A distinguished judge of history and of religion, also a Cambridge man, Lord Acton, has declared that Thomas à Kempis is the greatest spiritual writer who ever lived. The *Imitation*, which is here assumed to be his work, has been "translated into more languages than any other book save the Bible," and has passed into a quite extraordinary number of editions. It awakes in the souls of those who are in affinity with it a wonderful response and gratitude. What is the secret of its power?

It may be well, for illustration, to face the doctrine of the *Imitation* with its antithesis, or rather to face Thomas with an apostle of opposing ethics. This personal confrontation of two conflicting principles sets the combat upon the stage and in a vivid light. Elijah and Ahab, Ambrose and Theodosius, St. Francis and Innocent III., John Knox and Mary of Scotland, (greatest of all and decisive) Jesus and Pilate—in each interview you *see* and *hear* the clash of the oppugnant moralities. Opposite, therefore, the *Imitation* of Thomas à Kempis place in antagonism the *Prince* of Machiavelli.

(1) The *Prince* is an essay of about the same size as is the *Imitation;* and it was written in, roughly, the same European period. Among the educated it is almost equally famous. No doubt it deals with politics, with, that is to say, public morality and not with private life. But it has thrown out into the springs of thoughtful opinion certain suggestions; it has stamped upon the receptive minds of statesmen certain impressions; its teaching has thus spread from above down to the intelligence of ordinary citizens, and is held widely to have influenced the conduct of nations.

To the Christian conscience the *Prince* is as a whole distasteful. But, passing over other blemishes, its actual distinction rests mainly upon its approval of fraud. And the little packed chapter xviii. is the heart of the whole treatise: "How far a Prince is obliged by his promise." Here, from this chapter, are a few sinister passages.

> "It is honourable to seem mild, and merciful, and courteous, and religious, and sincere, and indeed to be so, provided your mind be so rectified and prepared that you can act quite contrary upon occasion. . . . Not forbearing to be good whilst it is in [your] choice, but knowing how to be evil when there is necessity." "A prince . . . ought to pretend to [religion] more than ordinarily." "It is of great consequence to disguise your inclination and to play the hypocrite well . . . [to be] neat and cleanly in [your] collusions."

How will you meet a moral challenge of this kind? Thomas meets it with short, homely, yet superb affirmations, Johannine in their simple majesty and authority. He affirms that *truth* is in the very bone and substance of the ultimate Reality which we call God, and that a profound and rooted necessity in human life is *veracity*. Take the great chapter of the *Imitation*, *De doctrinâ veritatis*.

> "Happy is he whom the truth teaches directly, of its very self; not by figures and perishable words, but as in itself it is."

Or take chapter xix.:—

> "The life of a Religious Person should shine with all virtues: in such a way that what he seems to be without, that in fact he be within. And,

indeed, there ought to be much more within than the men outside us can perceive: because our real inspector is God."

We think that here Thomas, rather than Machiavelli, is spokesman for mankind; says the thing which the conscience of civilized men wants to say. No doubt the upright man of the world says it, too; and the moral philosopher. But the difference, and my point, is that Thomas says it with *power*. They speak and men listen: Thomas speaks and men obey. And the secret of Thomas's power is his religion. His words, his ethical injunctions, flow from an unseen reservoir of spiritual energy; they draw their commandingness from the Almighty; they are the very breath of the voice Divine. And we want this masterful imperative.

When, someday, the temptation of our lives drives us on to prevaricate, then we want no pliable religion, we want a word of power like Thomas's to hold us back and stop the fundamental betrayal. Thus in the age-long battle of truth against falsehood Thomas is a champion and a protagonist, and has led and rescued millions upon millions of weak and tempted souls in the fray, because he himself has put on the whole armour of God and is able, having done all, to stand.

(2) Confront Thomas with another opponent, an advocate now not of deceit, but of force—force in its bare sense, *i.e.*, in effect, physical force.

Some twenty years ago Sir Henry Irving presented on the stage of the old Lyceum a play named *Peter the Great*. One brief scene of it is to our purpose. Peter, half-drunk, or at least, affected with wine, enters a room alone. On the table lies a small book. He picks it up, opens it casually, and begins to read aloud. It is a copy of the *Imitation*. And with dramatic incongruity the uncouth giant, savage in his blood and civilized in his ambitions, a prodigy of political force—the giant reads aloud, with the broken accents of intoxication and with hesitating pauses, a few quiet, devout sentences. Not at first, but after a few moments of turbid reflection, the *meaning* of the writer reaches and startles Peter's mind; he dashes the book on to the floor with hissings and cursings, stamps on it and angrily goes out.

He has not touched Thomas. He has but shewn a blind misreading of the ultimate facts of life. That kind of force which Peter vaunts does not *rule*; it is superficial and subservient. The power that *rules* is moral, celestial, of a stupendous quality; emerging from an infinite source, passing across the stage of Time, out to an infinite destination. Christians call it the Divine Will. Of this power Thomas is a great evangelist. Whenever that other power, physical force, raises its head in rivalry; whenever in the battle of life physical force sets up huge claims, bids for the prize, makes a gay show, offers us success, demands our allegiance; whenever we are tempted to yield and to throw in our lot with the arm of flesh—then Thomas, God reward him! scatters its pretensions. He sees deeper. He takes us down, down to the heart of things and opens our eyes there to the hidden supremacy of God. That is what we want. Now we touch bottom and are on the rock. Not violence, after Peter's notion, but goodness, after Thomas's, is the real sample of omnipotence. And Peter kicks that little book in vain. His rage surges and breaks for nothing upon the shores of Thomas's tranquility.

The Lord will keep the feet of his holy ones,
But the wicked shall be put to silence in darkness;
For by strength shall no man prevail.

(3) Lastly, the most effective criticism of Thomas arises within, not without, the Christian Society. Men who themselves are zealous Christians, who worship the Christian God, and who aim at the Christian practice, these men plausibly find fault with the *Imitation*. Let their spokesman this morning be one of our own members, held by us in surpassing regard, the Dean of Carlisle.

In his book, *Conscience and Christ*, the Dean freely admits certain ethical merits of the *Imitation*: "it is full of moral maxims," he says, "which go straight home to the most modern conscience." But he judges Thomas's contemplative, world-fleeing character with severity.[1] He even writes:

> "That solitary, world-renouncing absorption in one's own soul which commended itself to Thomas à Kempis would have seemed to Christ mere selfishness, and not at all the way to enter the Kingdom."

Now it is strange that in a book whose main object and sage achievement is to pierce through the externals of Christ's teaching, through the crust of occasion and circumstance, through the relative ignorance of that period, its ancient manners and social immaturity—to pierce through these husks right to the core of Christ's morality, and there to find and fetch back for our admiration and obedience one vastly fecund principle, Human Brotherhood: it is strange, I say, that a writer who in the case of Jesus is so perspicacious and discriminating, separating straw from wheat, husk from full corn in the ear, liberally allowing for development and selection, for disuse, adaptation, survival, and new shoots—it is strange that that same writer in the case of Thomas à Kempis should appear to be rigid and literally exacting, to forget (if one may say so) historical perspective, to pin Thomas to the wall of his own age or his own vocation, to run the essence into the accidents of Thomas's teaching, to grudge Thomas's most fertile doctrine a generous freedom and growth. For, dive down beneath the monastic surface into the human depths of Thomas's religion, and you will find and bring back to daily life another first principle—the instinct of trust in the Invisible, response to the Will Divine.[2] This principle, equally with Human Brotherhood, derives from Christ. This principle, born indeed for Thomas inside the hedge of the convent, is by no means tied to that abode. It is the first and great commandment; it breaks the bars of seclusion and mixes with the busy children of men. Behind the plough, along the street, away on the great waters, amid the whirl of industry or in the quiet schools of thought and nooks of home, wherever men toil and love and suffer and err and wonder and aspire—there "in His Will is our Peace."

It is the universal cry, as Pope discovers in his Universal Prayer. Indeed Pope's ideal, there adumbrated, is roughly, inadequately like to the ideal of à Kempis—viz., the simple life and trust in God.

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[1] A friend has reminded me of the vehemence, almost the rancour, with which Dean Milman assails the *Imitation*: it is pleasant to note the contrasted dignity and restraint of Dean Rashdall.

[2] I do not for a moment suggest that Dr. Rashdall does not also accept and value this principle; what he appears not to accept and value is the fact that this principle wonderfully illumines the dry ascetic circumstances af Thomas's life and book.

This day be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let Thy will be done.

The difference is not that Thomas was a world-renouncer and Pope was not. The ideal is not necessarily to *renounce* the world at all, though this Thomas happened to do. The ideal is to *surmount* the world, which Pope might do or any other active man, provided that in his religion he were sufficiently downright. To be in the world, but not of the world; to walk with your feet below and your head above; or, as Robertson of Brighton said, "to saturate life with God and the world with heaven"—that, disentangled, is Thomas's gospel,[3] and it is the genius of Christianity. The real difference between Pope's teaching and Thomas's is that Pope did not mean much by his religion, that with him it took second place, that his devotional language is literary and decorative, polished and artistic, with a pretty turn from the head not a life-long enthusiasm from the heart; whereas Thomas by his religion means immensely, he is out-and-out and consecrated in his communion with the Most High, and thus his words become for the sons of men "potent, felt, interior commands," and his little book becomes a second Bible.

Brothers and sisters of the Churchmen's Union, we, perhaps, especially need to sit at the feet of the mystics, the seers, the prophets of the Church—Isaiah and the Fourth Evangelist, Augustine and Bernard, George Fox and William Law. The days are trembling with spiritual opportunity. The English people, as they emerge from the nightmare of blood and grief, will be awake and hungry for the deeper realities of life; they will crave that their ancient and inbred piety, as Burke nobly phrased it, shall be fed with more wholesome food than before, and be trained in more healthy exercise. The dream of our Association is to meet this want—to develop for the English people within the Church of their fathers a reasonable religion. Are we equal to this sublime endeavour? Reasonable enough we may be: are we religious enough? Exactly here, we must own, we have incurred some discredit. The frequent charge, just or unjust, against us is that we are more clever than devout; that we are not at home in the Unseen; that we neglect religion on its heavenward and illimitable side; that a delicate and profound reverence does not appear to be our concern; that we do not speak or write or think or act or pray as if we knew ourselves to be children of the Eternal. In these defects, if such there be, Thomas à Kempis will succour us. I have thumbed his little volume for forty years, and I bear grateful witness that in the darkest hour, in the meanest temptation, in the loneliest struggle, in the vilest fall or the giddiest success, Thomas offers us the help of helps—a magnificent acquaintance with God.

[3] Of course, we do not claim, as is evident from the first pages of this address, that Thomas à Kempis presents to us the *complete* Christian ideal. Of the two great branches of Christian activity which we call "prayer" and "work," which are complementary the one to the other, and are meant for harmony and balance—of these two great branches he leans right over to the "prayer" branch and away from the "work" branch; so far does he go on that side that, to our regret, he at times disparages the "work" branch. Yet the extraordinarily instructive fact is that amid the storms and dark uncertainties of the sea of life this "world-renouncer" is a saving lighthouse to the anxious boats of the "world-affirmers." Thus it is that men and women in all walks, by the million, draw inspiration from Thomas. Thus it is that, as was lately reported in the *Guardian*, among the various books of devotion placed in Church Army Huts for soldiers at the front the *Imitation* was the favourite. Not for a moment do these soldiers and other stirring folk wish or intend to *renounce* the world; but they have longings to *surmount* the world and to walk with God; and here they find in Thomas à Kempis a guide of the first order, and they prize him and his book accordingly.

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